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Journal of Centre for Studies in Civilizations

Editor
D.P. Chattopadhyaya

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For subscription and all other business enquiries please contact:

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN CIVILIZATIONS
DD-24, (Near Nehru Enclave), Kalkaji
New Delhi-110 019 India
Phone: 91-11-2622 7832, 2622 7836 Telefax: 91-11-2622 7831
E-mail: csc@del2.vsnl.net.in, dpc@cal.vsnl.net.in

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From the Editorial Desk

The Centre for Studies in Civilizations brings out the issues of *Sandhan* – an interdisciplinary journal that takes into account the larger civilizational discourse with which the Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC) is concerned. *Sandhan* has been in the forefront of the civilizational dialogue in India right from its inaugural issue. The present volume continues with the same spirit in projecting the conceptual issues pertaining to the domain of the philosophy, history, culture, science and social sciences from the civilizational perspective.

We are grateful to all subscribers of *Sandhan* who continue to encourage us in our endeavours. The delayed issues of this journal will be brought out during this calendar year.

Consequently the present issue, Vol. IX, No.1, which though dated January-June 2009, contains researched articles that may have references to some recent studies.

D.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA
Editor

"Respectful Remembrance"

Members no more with us!

We regret the passing away of Professor G.C. Pande, Professor Daya Krishna and Dr. Arjun K. Sengupta. We place on record our deep appreciation of their individual contributions to the growth and well-being of the Centre for Studies in Civilizations. *Sandhan* was carefully nurtured by these intellectual stalwarts as an activity of the Centre's declared objectives.

PROFESSOR DAYA KRISHNA
(September 1924 to October 2007)

Professor Daya Krishna was Editorial Fellow of the Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture, and Editor of the *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*. He was formerly Professor of Philosophy at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur; Visiting Professor at Charleton College, Northfield; and University of Hawaii. He was also National Fellow of both ICPR and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR).

Professor Daya Krishna was and will remain a doyen among philosophers for his new interpretations and perspectives of Indian philosophy. He wrote extensively on theoretical issues on philosophy, sociology, economics and literature. His writings include *The Nature of Philosophy: Past and Future; Considerations Towards a Theory of Social Change; The Art of the Conceptual; Political Development: A Critical Perspective; New Perspectives in Indian Philosophy; The Historiography of Civilizations; Indian Philosophy: A Counter Perspective*, and the PHISPC publications – *Prolegomena to any Future Historiography of Cultures and Civilizations; Developments in Indian Philosophy from Eighteenth Century Onwards: Classical and Western* and *Towards a Theory of Structural and Transcendental Illusions.*

PROFESSOR ARJUN K. SENGUPTA

MA (Calcutta),
Ph.D. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
(June 1937 to September 2010)

Professor Arjun K. Sengupta started his academic career as Lecturer in Economics, London School of Economics, in 1967. He also taught at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, and the North Eastern University, Boston. He held various academic and research positions including Visiting Fellow, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, Visiting Fellow, Christian Michelson Institute, Bergen, Norway, Visiting Professor, The Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Professor of International Economic Organization, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and Research Professor (Hon.), Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.

During this chequered academic career of over four decades, Prof. Sengupta took charge of many important national and international assignments. These included the posts of Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India; Economic Minister, Indian High Commission, London; Special Secretary (Economic Advisor) to the Prime Minister of India; Executive Director for India, Bangladesh and Bhutan, International Monetary Fund, Washington D.C.; Special Advisor to the Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, Washington D.C.; Ambassador of India to the European Union, Belgium and Luxemburg, Brussels; Member and Member Secretary (Minister of State), Planning Commission, Government of India. He was Member of various high level committees involved in development planning, of the United Nations and the Government of India.

He had a number of publications to his credit including *International Financial Cooperation: Framework of Change* (co-author with Frances Stewart). *A Review of the North-South Negotiating Process. Commodities, Finance and Trade* (edited), *Reforms, Equity and the IMF – An Economist's World,* and contributed extensively to academic journals.

PROFESSOR GOVIND CHANDRA PANDE
(1923–2011)

Professor Govind Chandra Pande, thinker, scholar, historian, writer, regarded internationally as an authority on Buddhism and ancient Indian culture, joined the University of Allahabad, his *alma mater,* as Lecturer in the Department of History after receiving his D. Phil in 1947. Later he became Professor and Head of the Department of History at three universities—Gorakhpur, Rajasthan and Allahabad. He held the office of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Allahabad from 1978 to 1984. During 1984-88 he was Visiting Gaekwad Professor at Banaras Hindu University. He was the first National Fellow of Indian Council of Historical Research from 1985-86, and was also President cum Chairman, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. As Member of the Governing Board of the Centre for Studies in Civilizations (CSC), he edited several volumes of ancient history and culture in the *Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture* (PHISPC). He was also Chairman of Allahabad Museum Society, Allahabad, and the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath. The prestigious Fellowship of the Sahitya Akademi was conferred on him in 2002, in recognition of his contributions to the areas of ancient history and philosophy, as for his creative work as poet.

Recipient of many honorary degrees (Vidyā Vāridhi, Sahitya Vacaspati, Vakpati, Mahamahopadhyaya) and awards (Sankara Samman, Manisha Samman, Srivani Niyas Alankaran, Moorti Devi Award, Vishva Bharati Award, Naresh Samman etc.), he was honoured with D. Litt from Banaras Hindu University (2000), Gorakhpur University (2001), Punjab University (2002) and Allahabad University (2003). He was also recipient of the first Darshan Vigyan Samman. *Baghirathi,* a collection of two hundred and fifty Sanskrit poems, brought him the Saraswati Samman (2004) and Kabir Samman (2005). He authored and edited over sixty books and contributed over a hundred articles to encyclopedias, anthologies and journals. His *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism, Shankaracharya: Vichar and Sandesh,* (Life and Thought of Sankaracarya), *Studies in Mahayana, Foundations of Indian Culture* (in two volumes), *Bharatiya Parampara ke Mool Swara, Vaidika Sanskriti, Rgveda* and other books brought him encomiums from scholars such as Gopinath Kaviraj, Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya, Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Kshetresh Chandra Chattopadhyaya, I.B. Horner, H. Nakamura, Louis Renou, Bhikkhu Pasadika and others.

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Sandhān, Vol. IX, No. 1, January–June 2009

ARTICLES

Navjivan Rastogi

The Notion of Śakti in Kashmir Śaivism

अभिनवरूपा शक्तिस्तद्गुप्तो यो महेश्वरो देवः।
तदुभययामलरूपमभिनवगुप्तं शिवं वन्दे।। (भ.गी.सं.)
अनर्गलस्वात्ममये महेशे तिष्ठन्ति यस्मिन् विभुशक्तयस्ताः।
तं शक्तिमन्तं प्रणमामि देवं मन्थानसंज्ञं जगदेकसारम्।। (क्र.स्तो.)

For the notion of Śakti the period around the early thirties seems to be crucial with the publication of his *Śakti or Divine Power* in 1934, S.K. Das[1] was perhaps the first modern scholar to draw the attention of Indian academia to the inspirational role that Vedic literature played in shaping the notion of Śakti as a definitional concept of Kashmir Śaivism. More or less synchronously, K.C. Pandey[2] pointed out the inadequacy of previous explanations of Rasa-experience and looked upon the Śakti category as offering a coherent metaphysical rationalization of the aesthetic experience on an entirely different note. The celebrated Hindi poet Jai Shanker Prasad[3] in his great epic *Kāmāyanī* and insightful essays visualized the underlying joy and beauty on the one hand and a resolute potent will to assert identity on the other as characterizing the entire Indian speculation and creativity—*ānandavāda* and *ātmavāda* or *pauruṣavāda*—both rooted in the seminal structure of value so forcefully articulated in the notion of Śakti by the Kashmir Śaivists.

Towards 1963, Potter[4] came up with his famous paradigm of *Freedom from* and *Freedom to* offering an entirely new perspective to our understanding of the notion of power but it suffered from an inherent weakness as it failed to take the tantric systems, specially Kashmir Śaivism, into account. However, Potter's formulation was complemented by an unsuspected quarter when Sanderson[5] clearly gave a bolder orientation to the whole problem by putting forward *purity* and *power* as constituting the fundamental structure of values that was responsible for the duality of poles represented by the orthodox and heterodox streams of thought seeking depersonalized purity and unhindered omnipotence respectively. This emerged as a rationalization of the temperamental disdain of the orthodox for the sensual spontaneity and immunity from emotional involvement leading to the regime of strict self-control. The heterodox internalized even the impure and ugly boasting maximum inclusivistic tendency as a natural and instantaneous outflow of the self's own creativity. Consequently in behaviorical dialectics the former found the latter as impure and morally transgressive, the latter saw the former as impotent and escapist. Interestingly this dialectical value structure was already foreshadowed long before by Gopinath Kaviraj, albeit on a metaphysical plane, when he characterized the tantric culture as all-encompassing and inclusivistic in contrast to the Vedic/non-Tantric as exclusivistic.[6]

These developments prompt us to look into our current understanding more closely and undertake a fresh appraisal of the concept.

In the substantive classical tradition of Indian philosophies one comes across two types of approaches. One approach, which is categorial in spirit, dilates upon Śakti as constituting a category of being. Here it is only the Prabhākara School of Mīmāṁsā which views Śakti as an independent category. Other systems either subsume it under one of their accepted categories or reject it altogether. One might ignore this line of approach. But the other approach, which does not address the issue directly, may be gleaned from the respective cosmological world-views and it is this aspect that concerns us significantly. Notwithstanding their diametrically divergent positions, Sāṁkhya, Ṇyāya, Vedānta, Buddhism and Mīmāṁsā, show striking commonality in treating reality as falling outside the domain of Self. In Sāṁkhya-Yoga the reality-world (Prakṛti) is external to the Self (Puruṣa). In Nyāya-Vaśesika the self is a part reality in the sense that is one of the realities/categories and is dependent upon other realities, external to it, for its so-called functioning. In Vedānta the outer world is a projection. The Buddhists are even more radical. The external world is not only external to the self, the self itself is a logical construct. In theistic Vedānta, even in those systems which swear by some kind of non-dualism, the world logically and in some cases even the individual self remains alien to the Divine Self despite the absolute control exercised by the latter. In Mīmāṁsā we do come across such self as may be called subject or agent of sacrificial causality in its own right internalizing the ritual world, but as Sanderson rightly notes, its agentship remains depersonalized and external being subjected to and manipulated by the authority of the Vedic injunctions.[7]

As against this, it is only in the pre-classical phase that we have a cosmological perspective of Śakti but that is sporadic, disorganized and happens to be in the evolutionary phase. In classical systems, as we noticed above, whatever serious discussion we meet with on the issue relates the linguistic aspect to the exclusion of the cognitive, ontological and soteriological aspects. Even in this linguistic domain, the school of grammar does stand out alone unlike other linguistic theoreticians in viewing reality or world of discourse internal to the self, external reality being the self-differentiation of the self, technically the Word-Self. Śakti is projected as the sole instrument that brings about both differentiation of the self as well as internalization of the differentiated reality. This is perhaps the reason as to why the school of grammar constitutes one of the most formative influences on the Kashmir Śaivist formulation of Śakti.[8]

In a visible contrast, thus, to the classical Indian philosophies, the tantric systems as a rule nurture the concept of Śakti as a signature characteristic. Even within the tantric fold the Kashmir Śaivists betrary an uncompromising zeal in embracing Śakti as determining their identity. Abhinavagupta on three different occasions makes unequivocal statements to this effect. In the first[9], elaborating on Utpala's usage of *viśesadarśaneṣu,* "(among) special systems," he identifies them as those which subscribe to the predominance of Śākta non-dualism, where the adjective *viśeṣa*, "special", denotes Śakti as a defining feature demarcating it from the *sāmānyadarśaneṣu*, "(among) general philosophies", which profess pure consciousness as constituting the transcendental reality. In the second,[10] he singles out Śakti—the source of supreme bliss—as an exclusively Śaivist phenomenon emphatically rejecting any Sāṁkhya or Vedāntic connection thereof. In the third[11], he is even prepared to barter his absolutism with the Vedāntins, provided the latter is ready to transform its *avidyā* into Māyā "Śakti" of the Lord.

Śakti or power, as a result, emerges as a distinctive mark of the tantric vision of reality and the tantric world-view having been conceptualized as a single tool to account for the total range of our experiences, cognitions, modes of being and spiritual/soteriological realizations. The unfolding and enfolding of power is the ultimate abstraction to which everything could be reduced. Even on a peripheral analysis, such a perception of Śakti could be seen as etymologically resounding the semantic nuances of the word tantra. Derived from the root *tan* which conveys both expansion as well as contraction, the word *tantra* finds its parallel in Śakti which too, actualizes both of these meanings.

The monolithic formulation of the notion of Śakti was necessitated by the Śaivists' search for an integrated response to the conflicting and diverse pressures they were put to. Historically the Kashmir Śaivists, the proponents of the Pratyabhijñā school in particular, were the product of a multi-polar transition in the cultural, intellectual and social milieu of Kashmir and as such were duty bound to devise (i) a definitive Pratyabhijñā logic; again historically they had to (ii) relate to the other absolutist systems and yet underline the precise line of separation in concrete terms, (iii) transcend the Siddhānta Śaivism, their ideological predecessor, and internalize it, (iv) dislodge the Buddhist scepticism resulting from its doctrines of non-self and non-endurance, (v) identify and resolve the internal demands in the wake of enunciating their version of absolutism, (vii) devise an intra-school framework to support their individual statuses and at the same time retain their basic ideological oneness, (viii) preserve their root tantricity, (ix) find an ontological ground for the recognitive epistemology, (x) found the incluvistic all-integrating system of thought encompassing within itself strands of aesthetics, language, devotionism, yoga, spiritual praxis, tantric ritual, pragmaticism and, on the top of it, (xi) uncover a spiritual vision or an ultimate soteriology. The synoptic exegesis of Śakti was deployed by the Śaivists to achieve all these ends by a single tool.

A quick survey might give us an insight into the Śaivists' modus operandi. Jayaratha in his *Viveka* on the *Tantrāloka* describes the

Pratyabhijñā line of thinkers, from Somānanda to Abhinavagupta, as Pratyabhijñā logicians (*tarkasya kartāraḥ*).[12] This Pratyabhijñā logic is specifically formulated in Śakti-terms. Recognition of the Self-Absolute is nothing but the discovery of His powers (*śakti*).[13] Similarly the object of (re-)cognition, that is, the objective reality of our day to day discourse, is nothing but the expression of Śakti.[14] The latter strategy also seeks to establish the ontological base of the recognitive epistemology. The combined effect of this two-way strategy is the emergence of the absolutistic metaphysics which visualizes reality as a dynamic absolute, called *Śaktimān* in technical parlance, and Śakti as its integral dynamism also duplicating as its intrinsic mechanism, in a mode of ongoing mutual realization. In this way the Kashmir Śaivist is able to architect a radically absolutist alternative. Thus it is in point of Śakti that the Śaivist finds his fundamental difference from the other absolutist systems, specially Vedānta, which he designates as *sāmānyadarśana,* as against his *viśeṣadarśana.* We have already seen this in a slightly different context. What Abhinavagupta wants us to appreciate is the impact caused by infusion of Śakti as the defining element of reality. He spells out two fundamental differences. While reality's nature as consciousness remains the common feature between the two schools, the purity, that is inactive or powerless character, of consciousness prompts one to view the absolute as simply transcendent. Similarly the state of the absolutic realization happens to be literally an all-transcending, that is discreet, disconnected, experience. For the sake of contrastive clarity, Abhinavagupta calls it *vyatireka-turyātīta* (lit., "the trans-fourth marked by exclusion"). Back to Śaivism, because of its Śakti-nature, i.e. the inner dynamism, the absolute is considered immanent as well as transcendent. Accordingly the corresponding state of the absolutic vision, even though transcendental, is marked by inner continuity and is viewed as culmination or ultimate flowering of the lived reality[15]. Abhinavagupta aptly terms it *avyatireka-turyātīta*[16] (lit., "The trans-fourth marked by non-exclusion"). The acute significance of this formulation may be gauged from the fact that Abhinavagupta seeks to explain the finer of the two states of Rasa-experience with reference to *avyatireka-turyātīta* realisation[17]. Abhinavagupta further exploits this Śakti-connection to distinguish Śaiva absolutism from Yogācāra absolutism, popularly reckoned as subjective idealism (*vijñānavāda*).

Abhinavagupta firmly believes if *vijñāna,* "subjective consciousness", could be alternatively interpreted to mean Self who is also Īśvara (note, sovereignity or *aiśvarya* consists in Śakti), there would remain only nominal difference between the two.[18] Logically implied in this is the Śaivist rejection of the doctrine of flux of the discreet moments with inter-momentary continuity being logically determined, owing to his avowed adherence to the kinetic reality ensuring change with continuity represented by the abiding subject/Self/Absolute. With this reasoning the Śaivist is able to dispel the Buddhist cynicism caused by his belief in the doctrines of non-endurance and non-self.

One of the biggest challenges the Śaivists had to contend with was from their own ranks,—those who, unlike others, admitted Śakti—, that is, from the Siddhānta Śaivists. The gravity of the challenge increases manifold, because of their āgamic origin. In addition, both of them plead allegiance to the same set of āgamas to a large extent. The formal architecture of Śakti in Kashmir Śaivism is a discernible legacy from Siddhānta dualism. It was incumbent on the Śaivist to objectively lay down the premises he thought demarcated his system from Siddhānta Śaivism. Abhinavagupta knew too well that it was the dualistic orientation of the Siddhāntin's exegesis of the āgamas that created the divide and therefore called for its demolition.[19] For notwithstanding all professions of the divine perfection dressed in largely identical terminology on the basis of inalienable Śakti-connection, the Siddhāntin's admission of the separate categories of Paśu and Pāśa put the outer reality, the world, outside the real immanence of the Self rendering the Siddhāntin's absolute, the Godhead, as purely transcendental.[20] Kashmir Śaivists even faulted the so called identity of Śakti with Śiva,[21] *samavāya* ("inherence") being explained away as *tādātmya* ("self-sameness"), because this unity is that of a property inalienably residing in its substratum, which when subjected to reductionist logic, would point out to Śiva's logical transcendence over Śakti.

Śaivism was faced with the challenge of a different kind. This was again internal and incidental to finding and creating a truly updated and integrated Śakti-theorization. Instead of overcoming the alien viewpoints, it was now required to utilize and process the formative data offered by the Vedic literature consisting of Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and Upaniṣads (specially the *Śvetāśvatara*); classical philosophies like Sāṁkhya and Yoga; other philosophical traditions such as grammar and cognate sources such as āgamas and āgamic theologies such as Śaiva Siddhānta. The Śaivist was supposed to give voice to what remained unstated/unexplained, clarify the vague, discard the inconsistent, take the potential to its logical conclusion and appropriate the relevant data, so analysed, towards constructing a rationally congruent holistic model. Since this needs more space we might defer its consideration for a while.

The biggest challenge the Śakti-thesis was required to face was the fulfilment of demands thar Kashmir Śaivism made on itself. In the first place, Śakti was deployed by way of the most effective strategy for promoting an all-affirming (i.e., both transgressive and inclusive) model of non-dualistic absolutism.[22] In order to legitimatize its claim to be called non-dualism in an all-affirming scenario, it must satisfactorily account for the so-called riddle of the "other"[23] as contraposed to "self" and eliminate the gap of any kind between consciousness and matter, sentient and insentient.[24] In the second place, recourse was taken to Śakti-theorization in order to account for the inter-school micro-differences among the broad fold of the Kashmir Śaivism. Interestingly this appeared to be a contrarian approach, because Śakti until now was viewed as a unifying factor in between the subschools. This operation took place in two ways. At the macro level it divided all the monistic streams under Kashmir Śaivism into two broad groups—the Śiva-centric and the Śakti-centric, depending upon whose centricity or supremacy they believed in. Thus Pratyabhijñā, a dominant section of Kula, Trika and a sizable following of Spanda belonged to the former genre; likewise those who placed Tripurā, Kālī, Kubjikā etc., in the centre were affiliated to the latter. At the micro level, within the Śakti-centric domain, the modal variations and conceptualizations of Śakti were responsible for their inter se distinction. It is primarily on this ground that *Kālasaṁkarṣiṇī* is distinguished from *Vāmeśvarī*, *Parā* or *Kaulikī* and vice versa. A similar phenomenon is duplicated within the Śiva-centric domain.[25] Going down deeper within the micro-level even the intra-school internal differentiation is traced to the same source[26]

One major concern of Kashmir Śaivism or its constituent systems was to retain its connection with the original tantric background, not only at the level of philosophical speculation with its ever-growing intellectual sophistication but also at the level of practice and ritual. This showed itself as an empowered valuation of the female reflecting a radical shift of emphasis from the passivity of a female partner in the Vedic ritual to the active participation of a willing player in the tantric praxis. Its significant impact was seen in the altered orientation of the hermeneutics of Śakti—from power, dynamism, movement, capacity, capability, it came to be associated more with creativity, generation, potency. The institution of *dūti*, "female messenger," as a vehicle of spiritual transmission and ritual praxis;[27] visualization of Bhairava as surrounded by the family of Yoginī (*yoginī-kula*);[28] determination of the identity of an adept (*sādhaka*) on the basis of his affiliation to a particular 'family',[29] are patent manifestations of this tendency on a more visible plane. To this list may be added the "primal rite" (*ādiyāga*), a euphemism for ritual intercourse, marking active involvement of both the partners. What is important here is to note that the female here represents convergence of gnosis and praxis within herself[30] and that Śakti's equation with creativity, with a feminist undertone. gave a fillip to the series of philosophical and aesthetical reformulations and fresh abstractions.[31]

Unlike other Indian philosophers whose sole obsession seems to produce a *mokṣaśāstra*, a soteriology, Abhinavagupta's obvious priority is to evolve a complete system of thought, much on the lines of his western counterparts like Aristotle, Hegel or Kant, which takes life as a whole and thereby covers all aspects a human being, a living entity to be more precise, is concerned with—soteriological, metaphysical, psychological, aesthetical, social, religious etc. Abhinavagupta's obsession flows from his seminal postulate that life is a continuum, a compresence between twin poles consisting of the world and the transcendent, enjoyment and salvation, which throw up multiple lived-in universes subserving our different concerns. The integral system of thought, that Abhinavagupta is so passionate about, is sought to be built up through the two-fold mechanism of Śakti: power-proliferation (*Śakti-saṁvardhana*) and power-retraction (*śakti-samākarṣaṇa*). Abhinavagupta gives beautiful expression to it.[32] However this inclusivism or integrality of thought does not deter Abhinavagupta from pursuing a truly integrating affirmist spiritual vision and, for that matter, tracking a soteriological path, because spiritual sciences are expected in the main to seek a harmonious valuation of the dialectics of the pure and impure subjectivity[33] in their essential stride.

In describing non-dualism (*advaita*) as *mahādvaita* or *pūrṇādvaita* the Kashmir Śaivism brings home its definition of non-duality as *pūrṇatā* which means fullness, totality, integrality and perfection, all included. What must interest us is that *pūrṇatā,* abstracted as Śakti in the system,[34] is typically presented as *yāmala* ("pairing"), *sāmarasya* (harmony/synthesis) and *saṁghaṭṭa* (friction/rubbing) of *Śakti* and *Śaktimān,* in a triple predicative construction.[35] Thus Śakti, which happens to be the very "nature", "being"[36] or "self" of Śaktimān, does so in a very special way, underlining as it does the reciprocity of interpenetration, a participatory interaction, a self-dissolving fusion between "being" and its "substrate". Short of metaphor it implies that reality in Kashmir Śaivism is not a simple reality, but a reality full of content, Śakti itself constituting that content. This explains the logic behind the oft-repeated injunction of *śaktyāviṣkaraṇa*[37] forming the gateway to reality, to knowledge. Abhinava sets the record straight: it is not the discovery of Śaktimān alone, it is the discovery of Śakti as well and as a process it amounts to discovering Śaktimān via discovering Śakti.

The Śaivists take resort to two seminal reductions in order to explicate the definitive formulation of Śakti in the system. The first is:[38]

(One's) self is the Supreme Lord (*Maheśvara*)[39],

Supreme Lordliness (*māheśvarya*) consists in possessing all powers (*sarvaśaktitva*)[40],

Possessing all powers is (nothing but) Self-affirmation (*ahaṁvimarśa*).[41]

This equation has implications of far-reaching importance. Rationalizing *sarva-śaktitva* as *ahaṁ-vimarśa* is Utpala's extremely innovative formulation. By identifying the individual self with the Supreme Lord the way is paved open to elevate the individual subjectivity, that is, the individual consciousness, to the level of the Supreme Self-affirming Awareness. The intervening equation which is etymologically explained by deriving *māheśvarya* (that is, *mahān aiśvarya* = Great/Supreme Lordlines) as "being endowed with the Supreme Power" automatically creates space for reckoning *sarvaśaktitva* in the nature of self-affirmation.[42] The notion of self-affirmation which conceptually implies self-objectification in the selfreposing awareness lies at the very root of all linguistic, mantric, literary, aesthetic and metaphysical formulations.

In the second reduction "possession of power" (*śaktitva*) is equated with the power-holder's (*śaktimān's*) autonomy,[43] or 'freedom to'—to revert to Potter's phrase. The notion of subjective autonomy or agential freedom again plays a very crucial role in our understanding the structured relationship in between the major components of the system. The Śaivist solely depends upon the notion of autonomy, on the one hand, to account for the world of our daily encounter and interaction and on the other, to account for the autonomy itself. The second point needs some elaboration. What is it that sustains the ultimate reality in a transcendental state when the outer world stands retracted? It is the autonomy, the self-dependence, that sustains reality. This idea clearly comes out if one looks into the derivational genesis of the term *svātantrya.* One is called free if one remains grounded within oneself,[44] or one is called free if one expands oneself.[45] Thus the word *svātantrya* gets semantically very close to the word *tantra* and to the notion of *ahaṁvimarśa.*

This unique conception of autonomy forms the foundation of three important theses of the system. In typical parlance of the system they may be presented as: (i) *saṁvid-brahma-vāda,* (ii) *paramārtha-vastu-vāda* and (iii) *sarva-sarvagatatā-vāda.* In fact these are the terms employed by the system to describe its unique identity. The first avers that the ultimate reality, that is Maheśvara, is conscious and not inert, unlike Vedāntin's Absolute who, for the sake of distinctive clarity, is depicted as *Jaḍabrahma,* "inert absolute," implying thereby that the Brahman lacks the dynamicity which is supposed to be the essential character of Parama Śiva. This dynamicity may either be understood as *spanda,* "vibration," or as *ābhāsana-sāmarthya,* "manifesting potency", leaving no room for the admission of any external force such as the alogical Māyā. The second characterization aims at ensuring the fundamental reality of the manifested objectivity even in the phenomenal stage without injuring its ideal oneness with the absolute. The third[46] is a forceful restatement of rigorous non-dualism in the sense that each unit of manifestation is said to contain the whole world, microcosm replicating macrocosm in the very real sense.

In the notion of autonomy, we find four factors working together as constitutive of the concept in its totality—(i) non-dependence on the 'other' (*anyanirapekṣatā*)[47], (ii) self-repose (*ātma-viśrānti*), (iii) omnipotence (*sarvakartṛtva*) and (iv) lordliness (*aiśvarya*). The first brings out the beauty of the divine autonomy as it includes within or homologizes the 'other' or the 'different'. Thus it spells out the all-inclusive jurisdiction of freedom. The second, by transcending all dependencies, focuses on the foundational nature of reality as repose of the self in the self,[48] necessarily leading to the idea of self-affirmation. The third brings out the absolute causality, and the fourth underscores the inherent potential for actualizing the infinite possibilities.

Inner Structure of Śakti: Owing to the enormous importance of the Śakti-concept, the Śaivists have taken up the problem for a minute scrutiny. It will be therefore in fitness of things if we now have a look into inner structuring of Śakti as conceived by them as under:

(i) For Kashmir Śaivists Śakti is both a singular concept as well as a plural one. As a singular concept, it stands for the ultimate reality or its defining character, whereas as a plural reality it represents the phases or modes of the ultimate. Here too the Śaivist's usual approach of interweaving the two apparently discordant threads in a compact pattern may be easily noticed.

(ii) *Svātantrya-śakti* is viewed as 'the' power, the ultimate power or the over-arching power. It could definitively be construed as pure agentiality on the ontic front and as an *a priori* judgement on the cognitive and subsumes the entire power-universe within.[49]

(iii) As per the unique conceptualization in the *Parā-trīśikā-vivaraṇa*[50] the defining character of the Supreme Power must be considered *anugraha* which is visualized as enveloping the Absolute totally and thereby transfiguring His essential being into *anugraha*, because *anugraha* as unifying perception consists in not distinguishing Śakti from Śiva.[51]

(iv) Śakti's differentiation into the variety of forms is not intrinsic but only provisional. The one is taken to be many because the potential objects of desire etc. act as the differentiating adjuncts,[52] their designations reflect the pragmatic behaviour depending upon the end-result. Hence a category, whether of experience or of being, essentially remains Śakti-determined (*śakti-nibandhana*) and not object-determined (*vastu-nibandhana*).

(v) In the similar vein, in a cognate formulation, gradation or succession of Śaktī is sought to be explained. Śakti is a continuum being one and unitary, but the same is deemed to be successive because of functional diversity (*kṛtya-bheda*). The four-function or the five-function theories (*krama-catuṣka/krama-pañcaka*) in the Spanda and Krama Schools are the direct outcome of such a perception of reality.[53] In the system, specially in these two schools, the recognition of the self as agent of these four/five acts is what is implied by the notion of *śakticakra-vikāsa* etc.

(vi) In one of the most cohesive enunciations of the *pūrṇatā*-doctrine, Śakti, in contrast with the self-affirmative formulation, is also conceived as self-negating functionality.[54] Alternatively, this may be viewed as *nigraha*-formulation as apposed to *anugraha*-formulation seen above. The phenomena of differentiation (*bhedana*), othering, ignorance—defilement/coating (*mala*) in the tantric phraseology and judgemental imperfection (*akhyāti or apūrṇakhyāti*) in the gnostic –, and Śakti as a second cosmogonical category (*śakti-tattva*) are all sourced to this aspect. In the theological construction it is designated as the Veiling Power (*tirodhāna śakti*) and its function as the Veiling/Concealing Act (*tirodhānakṛtya)* isolating or differentiating "what in fact cannot be isolated or differentiated".[55] and as such is said to represent one aspect of the absolute. However, the nigraha-formulation is not confined to veiling alone, it ought to go beyond, otherwise the absolutic immanence (*viśvamayatā*) might become a logically weak proposition.

(vii) There are two conceptualizations of Śakti—absolute and relative. When it is viewed as the defining essence of the transcendental reality it is presented in the absolutic terms, but the moment it relates to the manifested world because the world or creation is nothing but an aggregate of the absolutic powers, it becomes relative.[56] Among the relative powers, higher the one the more inclusive it is, subsuming as it does the lesser powers.[57] Thus inclusivism is the determining parameter of Śakti's extent of permeation and closeness to its source. It is why the absolute power is deemed to be all-inclusive. Abhinavagupta finds great virtue in hierarchization of powers since, according to him, it furnishes a cogent normative structure to assess the relative merit of the multiple religious approaches advocated in the scriptures.[58]

(viii) Besides the dualistic (*bheda*) and non-dualistic (*abheda*) postulations the Kashmir Śaivists formulate a difference-unity (*bhedābheda*) perspective. Accordingly in the realm of manifestation Śakti is virtually rendered in terms of *bhedābheda.*[59] This perspective helps resolve the riddle of one Śakti becoming many, the intermediary divergences being explained away as caused by the alternating emphases on difference or non-difference.[60] In this connection some of the stipulations merit our attention as under:

(a) The very idea of manifestation (*avabhāsana*) has, of necessity, to be explained in terms of *bhedābhedana,* "non-differentiating the differentiated", since its immediate purpose is to account for the ontic status of the manifested. Let us be. clear. As a process, the manifestation, that is, creation must refer to the self-differentiation of power, but as a product, which is technically considered to be an *ābhāsa,* "manifestation", it must involve some kind of non-differentiation (bordering on unification, synthesizing).[61] Thus the same thing may be depicted as *śakti*[62] when treated as subjective propensity or urge (*saṁraṁbha*), as property (*dharma*) when viewed as a kind of crystalised form (or a form of the substance), as quality (*guṇa*) when viewed as something dependent upon that crystalised form or substance, and as an operation or activity (*vyāpāra*) when viewed as both prior and posterior.[63]

(b) In an exclusive formulation based on *bhedābheda,* Śakti is conceived as the "pure determinate idea" (*śuddha vikalpa*). Apparently sounding like a contradiction in terms, the 'purity' of logical construction is devised as a tool to bridge the gap between the logical constructions that mark our daily existence (depicted as *aśuddha-vikalpa* "impure thought construction") and indeterminate ideality (*avikalpā saṁvit*). The purity lies in the 'refinement' of or the 'absolution' from the impurity of a mental construction, that is, recognizing the essential 'I-ness' of the 'not-Iness' in manifestation. Mental constructs, by virtue of their being the properties of mind, are to be taken as powers: this is the crux of the argument.[64] Equipped with such a formulation the Śaivist, on the one hand, is now empowered to propagate the *upāya* theory of redemptive knowledge, more particularly the *śāktopāya,*[65] totally focussed on the 'purity' of determinate idea, and the corresponding mode of self-realization, *śākta samāveśa*[66], in the technical language of the system, both forming the gnostic soteriology of the system. On the other hand, he is able to garner metaphysical support to account for Rasa-experience in terms of *śuddha vikalpa.* Aesthetic experience is thus conceptualized as mental visualization,[67] mental perception (that is, mental operation akin to perception, *anuvyavasāya*)[68] having been freed from, absolved (cp. *śuddha*) of the individualizing conditions of time, place and personal dispositions.[69]

(ix) In the cosmic reflection[70] Śakti turns out to be its efficient cause, besides continuing to remain the material cause. Thus in point of the precise functioning, Śakti is distinguished from *upādhi,* "adjunct''. When something depends upon another for its revelation, this other-caused revelation is called *upādhi,* whereas a self-caused revelation is termed Śakti.[71] In a statement ascribed to Utpala by Jayaratha (not traceable to the printed texts), an *upādhi* is said to lend its form to the object, but it is the autonomy of consciousness that is responsible for the forms of consciousness.[72]

(x) (a) In its internal contexture Śakti is always a twin-layered concept in the sense that it reveals itself and also, in addition, implies or refers to its relation with something else. This 'something else' may either be its container/holder/substrate, or concomitant attribute or cognate power or the effect brought about by it. For example, take the case of *jñānaśakti,* 'knowledge power'. It connotes knowledge itself as a power, and also knowledge as a vehicle of the Lord's (or holder's) power.[73] Likewise, in the case of fire, it reveals itself as power and because it burns, it also implies action.[74] In a somewhat different situation when it is said that 'Śakti does/makes' (*saktiḥ karoti*) it presupposes possession of corresponding capacity to do or make. Here, it may be noted that *śakti* assumes the mantle of a possessor of power (*śaktimān*) and implies association with power other than itself (*śaktyantarayoga*).[75] In any case, it does not entail any duality because there is no transgression of Śakti's essential nature.

(b) In a different but innovative formulation Abhinavagupta further brings out the twin-layered dimension of Śakti. These two layers, that go together, are constituted by the essential nature (*svarūpalakṣaṇa*) representing the first layer and the auxiliary/cooperative causality (*sahakārilakṣaṇa*) representing the second layer. However, one should not take Śakti's independent conceptualization to mean separate external existence different from the object brought about by that power. This is because Śakti is so called only when it dwells in an object that serves as its locus after having been brought out, thereby leaving no space for its separate location. One may therefore conclude that occasioning an object here represents auxiliary causality and subsisting as essential nature represents *svarūpa*.[76]

(xi) Śakti and Śaktimān, power and its prius, are conceptual abstractions, calling for different linguistic appellations, having a single referent in reality, because of their quintessential qualitative homogeneity. Thus, insentience which at the bottom of its gradual diminution is represented by a fixed post or a motionless hill and awareness which at the zenith of its gradual excellence by Parama Śiva constitute two ends of the same power-reality.[77]

(xii) Śakti and Śaktimān are at the most linguistic formulations because of their constitutive homology depending upon the subjective intention. If the referrer primarily intends plurality, it would be called Śakti and if he intends to allude to one alone, it would be called Śaktimān.[78]

(xiii) Śaktimān, as the locus of Śakti, needs not be taken at its face value. In the Śaivist's formulation, the word substrate, priuś, locus (*āśraya*) is to be construed in a significantly different way. Śaktimān as a locus does not act as a physical support, but as an active free agent. Thus the container-contained relationship or property-substrate relationship (*dharma-dharmi-bhāva*), as propagated by Nyāya and other schools is ruled out here.[79] For Maheśvara, or for that matter even an individual subject, holding or supporting means freedom to unify, analyse, separate, repose, reject, manifest and/or manipulate the power/s as per will in glaring contrast to an insentient object such as fire, which, though substrate to several powers like burning, cooking, heating, sweating etc,[80] has no freedom of independent action.

(xiv) The Śakti-Śaktimān paradigm is seminal to the intrinsic structure of all concepts and theses in Kashmir Śaivism.[81] Whichever concept one may choose to analyse, this paradigm would be evident by its translation into the very mechanism of the concept. This paradigm is secondarily reduced to the equation of *upāya-upeya* with *śakti-śaktimān* in that order.[82] This issue has already been dilated upon in detail earlier, hence we shall focus only on hitherto untouched aspects from Utpala's[83] suggested equation of the Godhead (*Parameśvara*) with the inner individual self (*pratyagātmā*). Abhinavagupta contends, one is bound to reduce consciousness-power (*citiśakti*) ultimately to the supreme agency (*parākartṛtā*). Reinterpreted in causal terms, the Śaktimān is viewed as agent and Śakti (i.e., *citiśakti*) as (his supreme) agency. What is to be noted is that the Lord, who is the primary cause as the agent, serves as the *upāya* (of Śakti/agency) and agency, which is an effect, becomes *upeya* (of the agent). In a reverse reduction, when one wants to grasp reality, Śakti becomes *hetu*, (reason/minor term) and Śaktimān *hetumān*, i.e. *sādhya* (major term).[84] In this case Śakti is to be treated as *upāya* and Śaktimān as *upeya* in an epistemic relationship. From this it is easy to gather that this means that goal relationship is a reversible proposition between Śakti and Śaktimān whose roles are interchangeable pointing to their intrinsic oneness. In either case, the net outcome remains the same.

(xv) The above-noted paradigm has some additional perspectives to it. In the manifested world this paradigm is variously interpreted. Between Maheśvara and Śakti, indisputably they exist on the Śaktimān-Śakti axis, but what happens between two Śaktis or between Śakti and the manifested world. In one perspective we have seen that the higher and more inclusive power, even while retaining its Śakti character, enters the role of Śaktimān for the limited purpose of holding the lower or lesser powers within. To this, however, a new perspective may be added. Between the two Śaktis in a hierarchical scale or between the causal Śakti and the reflected multitude the relationship might be viewed as one between (*śakti*) power and *vyakti* (emanation or manifestation).[85] Within this reflected manifold the primary paradigm reappears, where the consciousness-element constituting the subjective part represents *Śiva* or *Śaktimān* and the insentience-element constituting the objective part represents Śakti.[86]

(xvi) Exegeting *Parā vāk* as *Śakti* per se Abhinavagupta comes out with an immensely innovative and complex formulation of the Śakti-Śaktimān relationship.[87] Śakti is conceived as the absolutic immanence having enfolded within Herself the totality of meaning-world comprising subject and objects in a sequenceless form and is to be distinguished from Śaktimān, that is Parama Śiva, who is characterised by the non-emergence of variety of any hue. Thus He represents the absolutic transcendence. Now this mode of the absolutic being as Śakti, embodying totality in enfolded form, is conceptualised as His 'relishing' (*camatkāra/ āsvāda*) of His own self. In this formulation Śakti is visualized as relish, joy, that is, *ānanda* and Paramaśiva as its abode. Śakti in this way constitutes the all-enfolding mode of reality and the factum of all-enfoldment itself constitutes the self-referential relish. With this innovative valuation of Śakti, Abhinavagupta allows his metaphysics to slide into the domain of aesthetics laying the ground for his much acclaimed rationalization of rasa-experience in terms of Śakti.

(xvii) The same logic is extended to the realm of the religious language, in fact to the realm of the language as such. The state of the absolutic being where there are no referents except the absolute since there is nothing which could be reflected upon, is called, Bhairava. This Bhairava, as Śaktimān, is called *śabdarāśi*, 'word-mass', embodying together all the fifty phonemes of the alphabet. The very same absolute is reckoned as Śakti, and is also regarded as *mātṛkā* ('matrix/mother') when it comes in contact with the objects of reflection, represented by letters each embodying a reflection, a judgment.[88]

Thus on recapitulation, as noted by B.N. Pandit,[89] we come across three formulations of Parama Śiva, depending upon the angle from which we approach Him:

(a) As transcendent: He is dense awareness (*cidekaghana*),
(b) When inclined towards emergence of world specially from the perspective of fullness of joy: He is identified with the *Śiva* category,
(c) When the blissful or joyous perspective towards world manifestation is overtaken by will-penetration : Parama Śiva is (called) Śakti.

(xviii) The Kashmir Śaivists have consistently hammered upon one point–that the first and the foremost condition of any Śakti conceptualization is *abheda*, i.e., absolute non-dualism. That is, in a non-integral environ it would be logically impossible to even think of Śakti, and for that matter, of Śaktimān. It is the absolutist's argument against difference, duality or otherness (*vyatireka*). Somānanda asks: If Śakti be deemed different from Śaktimān, who is it that works in the state of difference?[90] A thing can distinguish one object from an other only when it has a proven separate existence, but in the case of Śakti-Śaktimān, what is it that is sought to be differentiated and by whom[91]? Moreover, if the two are believed to exist independently, would not the consequent dependence on the 'other' demolish the very doctrine of the autonomy, sovereign majesty (*Īśitā*, lit. Lordliness), of the Lord?[92] Similarly in the eventuality of the Śaktimān's separate existence the Śakti appellation would turn out to be a linguistic anarchism,[93] it could be anything else—property (*dharma*), quality (*guṇa*), attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*)—but Śakti. Even the analogy of reflection here does not help. Because in reflection even though the difference (between the reflected image and its archetype) is non-existent yet it shows; in the case of Śakti, even this so-called showing of difference is not there, since this would virtually amount to a contradiction in terms.[94] So the Śakti-Śaktimān phenomenon is clearly a case of absolutic dialectics. This is brought out by Utpala again in a highly imaginative construction, without even making a direct reference to Śakti and Śaktimān, while equating *pratibhā* ('intuitive awareness/intelligence/genius/re-imaging') with *Maheśvara.*[95] In the whole Śaiva tradition Pratibhā is identified with Śakti.[96] Abhinavagupta in the very beginning of the *Tantrāloka* goes to the extent of treating it as *Bhairavayoginī.*[97] It is no coincidence that in the whole of Indian poetics Śakti has become synonymous with Pratibhā.[98] Against this backdrop, in his exegesis of Utpala[99] Abhinavagupta brings out his master's intention eloquently in no uncertain terms in the notion of Pratibhā, that is, the absolute unity, identity, oneness of Śiva and Śakti: Pratibhā is Maheśvara.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

The idea of Śakti has evolved over time within the system. However, this paper can only briefly look into that aspect. Among the āgamas that are usually associated with Kashmir Śaivism, the *Mālinīvijayottara* representing as it does our earliest known sources, speaks of an inherent relationship between Śakti and the creator of the world, but it is difficult to say if it could be described as wholly monistic. It does speak of the oneness of the Divine creative will, the emergent state of Śakti, which in course of self-differentiation undergoes Śakti-differentiation, and from this point onwards assumes the infinite variety of the subjects, objects and phonemes.[100] The two āgamas claiming their affiliation to still older *Rudrayāmala Tantra,* namely the *Vijñānabhairava* and *Parā-Trīśikā,* do evince an absolutistic attitude. The *Vijñānabhairava,*[101] in very clear terms, moots the idea of Śakti and Śaktimān and their intrinsic unity shedding even a shade of duality whatsoever. It also enunciates the notion of Parā Śakti lending gnostic orientation to it thereby espousing the unity of power and knowledge (*śakti* and *jñāna*) and discovery of Śaktimān through Śakti. It is the *Vijñanabhairava* that actually renders Śakti's triple gnostic instrumentality, though generally ascribed to the *Mālinīvijaya*, in terms of unity, unity-duality and duality, a phenomenon that has enormously impacted the later formulations of Śakti. The tone of the *Parātrīśikā*, which is said to have inspired commentaries by a sizable number of Pratyabhijñā authors, is non-dualistic preaching of the essential unity of the microcosm with the macrocosm as subsisting within the nature of Śakti. Śiva, described as the transcendent *Anuttara*, is viewed as Śaktimān who potentially contains the entire existence, both mobile and immobile, within as does a tiny seed the enormous banyan tree within symbolized by Śakti.[102] The *Netra-tantra* emphasized the blissful character of Śakti that demarcated it from the blissless Śiva.[103] A further rich source of āgamic valuation of Śakti is provided by the Krama āgamas.[104] In the Krama āgamas we come across two definite strands with the alternating emphasis on Śiva and Śakti as being the primary reality, though in either case the Krama approach boasts of monistic rigour holding different visualizations of Śakti (e.g., Anākhyā, Saṁkarṣiṇī, Jayā, Kubjikā, Kālasaṁkarṣiṇī, Kālī) all devouring duality and shining in their pristine awareness. Coming from the revealed to human literature the earliest formulations we come across with are from Vasugupta (800-850 AD) who accords a philosophical orientation to the mythological images of Śakti equating Umā and Kumārī with Śakti as well as the absolutic will.[105] The whole creation, i.e. the world of Śiva, is projected either as a proliferation of His power or a mass or aggregate of His powers.[106] On either reckoning the Śakti-texturing is not diluted. To be endowed with Śakti is the innate condition of being, hence impure and pure, i.e. individual and cosmic, subjectivity is inlaid with Śakti. As such, Śakti-visualization is deemed to be the source of realization of both, the limited powers as well as the absolute sovereignty (*vibhūti*).[107] Vasugupta finds this point conducive for introducing the concept of *cakreśatva*, "the mastering of the cycle of powers," as constitutive of the absolute sovereignty, identical with the subjective autonomy.[108] This conceptualization reflected a landmark internalization of the Śaivist who saw his Self as an actor, his inner personality as the stage and his sense-faculties as the audience aesthetically appreciating the outside world as spontaneous expression of his infinite internal autonomy pulsating with life.[109] Vasugupta offered a refreshingly poignant aesthetical paradigm in which an actor exercised absolute control in drifting away from his original self to the enacted self and again going back to his original self rendering the perceived world as personal enactment of a self-scripted narrative in stark departure from one where the external world was the shadow of an impotent contentless subjective reality through machinations of an inexplicable impersonal agency. Śivānanada is another important author on the contemporary scene hailed as Avatārakanātha in the tradition for founding the Krama system whose views are of critical importance. Though the tradition is divided over his exact affiliation[110] as to whether he subscribed to the ultimacy of Śiva or that of Śakti, he reckoned Śakti as *Kālī* and identified it with Divine autonomy conceived in terms of extreme dynamism.[111] The unitary flow of Śakti underwent self-differentiation due to its functional modes, numbering twelve (thirteen, according to the differing interpretations). These functional modes later came to be known as *kṛtya* in their causal aspect[112] and *kālīs* in their manifested aspect.[113] Śivānanda was responsible for radicalizing the way Śakti was to be looked upon in future in the system. Among the second generation philosophers came Kallaṭa (825-875 AD),[114] the author of the *Spanda-kārikā*[115] and a direct pupil of Vasugupta. Kallaṭa gave a new orientation to the dynamic construction of reality, just like the Krama, in terms of *spanda*, "vibration". He reiterated Vasugupta's postulation of Śiva as the Lord of the cycle of powers (*cakreśa*), positing *spanda* (lit., slight movement) in terms of unfoldment and enfoldment (*unmeṣa/nimesa*) of powers and abstracted reality in those of pure kinesis. The absolutic power was perceived as a unity of knowledge and action, being the characteristic attribute of the absolute.[116] This was further reformulated in terms of innate autonomy.[117] Thus paving the way for perceiving the absolute as omniscient and omnipotent, this doctrine could be said to have anticipated and inspired the Pratyabhijñā formulations of *jñāna and kriyā* as *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* integrated into the notion of *svātantrya*. In the Spanda cosmology the ultimate power was designated as primary or universal (*sāmānya*) vibration and the whole of the external world as the instance of secondary, particular or specific (*viśeṣa*) vibration enlivened by the former.[118] This catalyzed into transformation of the aesthetic metaphor of the stage into that of a sport in which the realized self now visualized the external world as an ongoing frolicking activity of his own awareness.[119] Moving forward Kallaṭa accorded a metaphysical orientation to the popular perception of Śakti as strength (*bala*) and enterprise (*uddyoga*) making it a part of the Śakti-vocabulary. This spiritual enterprise, duly buttressed by strength, i.e. power, was conceived as leading to the clearer, more distinct visualization of self.[120] As a part of the Śakti dialectics, on the inverse side, ignorance (*ajñāna*) was seen as being instrumental to the exhaustion caused by sapping of spiritual energy.[121] As against this, the firm grounding of the self on his own endows him with absolute control and enjoyment rendering him thereby the Master of the Cycle of Powers, a theme with which Kallaṭa begins and ends his kārikās.[122]

Kallaṭa's maternal cousin and pupil Pradyumna Bhaṭṭa, the author of the *Tattvagarbha Stotra,* subscribed to the ultimacy of Śakti, though remaining within the monistic Śaiva fold.[123] In his leanings he appears to have sided with the Krama. He seems to have two conceptions of Śakti. In the first conception as the ultimate principle, Śakti comprehended Śiva within, though Śiva in His turn was an all-inclusive principle—there was no such form of speech as was not present in Śiva. That is, Śakti was viewed as the super-inclusive principle.[124]The entire categorical world of thirty-six categories was an expansion of Śakti hence, even the determinate manifestation had freedom as its nature.[125] In the second conception, Pradyumna Bhaṭṭa considers the Śakti category, the second stage of cosmic emanation, as "slight swelling up"[126] (*kiñciducchanatā*), a view that was aggressively contested by Somānanda—who introduced the concept of *aunmukhya* (lit., proneness) as a cognate concept of *kincidūchantā.*

At this point enter Pratyabhijñā philosophers, headed by Somānanda (875-925 AD) who showed unflinching faith in the supremacy of Śiva and ardently stood by non-difference between Śakti and Śaktimān.[127] For him, this was a universal principle unexceptedly applicable to all instances. Thus Śiva, the Śaktimān, was conceived as one's own self, consisting of five powers namely awareness (*cid*), bliss (*ānanda*), will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and action (*kriyā*). The first two define His transcendence and the next three, in their intense subtlety, immance.[128] He concretizes into the worldly forms by his own power.[129] Gnoli[130] and Kaw[131] both draw our attention to the central element in Somānanda's thesis. According to him, the will, the first state of consciousness, preceding every activity has two moments—an initial moment of tension and the actual will. Corresponding to Pradyumna Bhaṭṭa's "slight swelling up", Somānanda envisions in all our activities "an element of 'drive', of 'urge', of an inner conation (*saṁrambha, aunmukhya, udyoga, samudyama*) which, directed towards a given end, contains within itself the image of things to come. This tension is the most intimate and central activity of consciousness."[132] This tension (which might be traced to the root/to tend), also described as the "initial moment" (*prathamā tuṭi*), boasting an aesthetic lining (*āmoda*),[133] is marked by the commingling vibration of all powers.[134] Retaining this joyous tinge (*prabhāvāmodabhāvitaḥ*) Somānanda modifies the aesthetic metaphor of the "play of awareness" into the "play of the joyful sovereign".[135] By pronouncing the ultimate character of the world being in the nature of Śiva (*śivātmaka*), Somānanda in effect means that there is nothing that is without the power of Śiva. It is because of its Śakti character that a thing is called existent (*sat*).[136]

Utpala (900-950 AD) is one of our most important theoreticians and is known as the originator of the Pratyabhijñā school. What is strange, Utpala in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-kārikā* and *Vṛtti* does not directly define Śakti, skips Śakti as a category from the cosmological scheme (*śakti-tattva*), and employs the word *śakti* only as a predicative suffix to the substantive proper names (e.g., *māyā-śakti, pareśa-śakti, kāla-śakti* etc.). Yet some of his formulations bring his attitude into sharp focus. The first is a two-way formulation in terms of *śaktyāviṣkaraṇa*[137] ('discovering through power') and *śaktiprakāśana*[138] ('manifesting through power') with reference to the ascending and descending realizations respectively. In the former Śakti is the 'extraordinary faculty' the recognition of which as a sign leads to the discovery of the self as the Godhead obscured by delusion and in the latter, it is 'absolute autonomy' recognition of which is responsible for bringing to light the inner absolutic character of the practical reality of conceptions and names (*jñānābhidhānātmā*). That the power in this context is knowledge and action, or subjectivity and agency to be precise, becomes evident when he defines the Godhead as the self who has recognized himself as filled with infinite knowledge and action.[139] Thus the final equation that emerges is: power is equal to autonomy is equal to knowing and acting. The individual self and the

Supreme Self are both Śaktimān and divine in their respective domains, the dividing line being non-recognition and recognition of powers as belonging to them.[140] Though the absolute is transcendent and immanent, it is the latter aspect the Pratyabhijñā is more concerned with. Since the awareness principle constitutes external reality, the world, there is no scope for anything else. Hence all modes of cognition or action have to be deduced as powers. Accordingly perception, memory, logical determination and action are called *jñāna-*, *smaraṇa-*, *apohana-*, and *kriyā-śakti* respectively.[141] It is the reason that the soteriological realization of the self, conceptualized as *samāveśa* ("immersion") in the system, which is gnostic in nature, is viewed as Śakti-samāveśa.[142]

Utpala's metaphysical classification of powers into *īśvaraśakti*, "Lord's power", and *maheśvaratā/maheśvara-śakti*, "Supreme Lord's power", is semantically very significant[143] indicating the essentially divine character of reality in both of its phases—empirical and metempirical. Śakti is viewed as the definition of non-dualism: in case Śaktimān is reckoned as different, Śakti would lose its very signification.[144] Giving a valuational orientation Utpala rationalizes *īśvaraśakti* as lacking in self-repose (*ātmaviśrānti-virodha* i.e., other-looking, extroverting) whereas *maheśvaratā* is the self's self-resting or self-repose (*ātma-viśrānti*).

After Utpala, his grand pupil Abhinavagupta (950-1020 AD) is by far the most important author for anything connected with Kashmir Śaivism. However, since most of the insights and ideas in this paper are drawn from him, we propose to skip his views for fear of repetition.

Among the post-Abhinava Śaiva thinkers, Kṣemarāja (975-1025 AD) occupies the place of the highest eminence. While explaining the phrase *śakticakravibhavaprabhavam* ("source of the majesty of the cycle of powers") in his commentary, *Spandasandoha,* on the first verse of the *Spanda-kārikā*[145] he develops a complete hermeneutics of Śakti within the overall framework of the Krama system and his version of Kashmir Śaivism called *Akulatrika.* It must be noted, however, that here the powers stand for a pluralistic concept, Śiva being their ultimate undifferentiated prius. In all Kṣema accords eleven interpretations. We may take a look at them[146] seriatim: (i) The manifest world of our experience represents His powers. That is whatever shines is His power; (ii) Our senses are powers and their natural disposition is to reach out to their respective objects; (iii) Śakti represents the deity presiding over the sense/s. In a formulation, peculiar to the Krama system, these are sourced to the trans-sequential reality manifesting a successive world of five-fold acts (*kramārtha*); (iv) Śakti represents *mantra* and *mudrā* arising from and being absorbed into Śiva; (v) Śakti, by implication, would stand for the mind of the adept which is brought to rest within Śiva's own nature; (vi) Śakti means initiation, grace and the visualization of the object of meditation; (vii) Powers here represent the deities Brāhmī etc. who signify and preside over the consonants from *'ka'* to *'ma'* and the series of cause-deities headed by Brahmā who are unable to ascend to a higher level of non-dual absolutic reality or, on an alternative construction, are capable to ascend to increasingly higher realms by discarding the lower ones; (viii) Śakti means *yoginī*, both internal and external, representing one of the *khecarī, gocarī, dikcarī, bhūcarī* and her consort (hero/es = *vīra/s*), dispenser of lower yogic accomplishments; (ix) Śakti stands for *vāmeśvarī*, who presides over cycles, both internal and external, named Khecarī, Gocarī, Dikcarī and Bhūcarī, technically called *pañcavāha* in the Krama parlance; (x) Śakti represents feelings of attachment, aversion, anger etc. governed by respective āgamaic deities and bodily elements equally governed by them; (xi) Śakti means the ray of pure consciousness capable of entering into the free and unitary light of consciousness. By ascribing so many senses to the word *śakti* Kṣemarāja intends to propound that one's own nature is Śiva in accordance with the tenets of the most exalted (*uttama*) system called 'Akula Trika', as distinct from Kula Trika or Anuttra Trika, which subscribed to the absolute reality in both the phases—transcendent and immanent.[147]

In the post-Kṣemarāja phase the two authors who impress are Jayaratha and Maheśvarānanda, beside Bhāskarakaṇṭha to some extent. But their merit lies in reconstructing, explaining and presenting the original data. Not much new ground is seen there, and hence they may be deferred to some future occasion for discussion.

TO CONCLUDE

What makes Kashmir Śaivism relevant today? In what way could it address our contemporary concerns? Concerns are very much real, menacing and traumatic: globalization, consumerism, clash of civilizations and the terminally challenged right to dignified life and cultural identity under the constant shadow of extermination. The unequivocal answer world be: by an honest and willing appropriation of the true import of the Śakti doctrine in our life and way of thinking. In the immediate context of Kashmir and Kashmiris it has all the more significant and demonstratable bearing.

Śakti is the name of the ethos of Kashmir Śaivism. Śakti is the notion of integrity, unity, dignity and beauty. It does not call for dissolution of individuality, rather inspires one to fill it with fullness, all-encompassing universality. It constitutes a beacon call to look for perfection as a value in the imperfect and go on raising its level to that of the fullest awakening. Then, Śakti is not simply an idea, or an ideal for that matter, but an imperative, a requisite for the life of fulfilment, for the life of dignity, for realizing one's infinite and highest potential without fear and doubt, be it an individual, a community, or a nation. In the *Spanda-pradipikā,* Bhaṭṭa Utpala defines Śakti as virility, whose possessor dies not, decays not, falls not from his infinitely empowered innate existence:

> *vīryaṁ sadāluptaśaktih nāśābhāvācca tadvataḥ /*
> *ātmasattvāparibhraṁśalakṣaṇādvairyamāsta /*
> *anantaśaktiḥ sā sāmarthyāt sarvataḥ sadā //.—(Sp. P., p. 104)*

This state of entrenchment within one's own leads to infinite empowerment in perpetuity resounding in the Vedic declaration—*nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ.* (*Muṇ.U.*3.2.4) Recognition of one's identity, one's potential as a never ending pursuit generates strength, confidence in one's capacity to achieve, courage to face challenge and actualize his higher mission. It would be quite in order to go back to Jai Shanker Prasad, the great Hindi poet of Kashmir Śaivism already alluded to at the outset, who in the following stanzas, implores us, humans, to shed our growing weakness and indulge head on into the sportive activity of power urging human beings who are essentially power-electrons but are helplessly on a constant run, owing to their fragmented existence, to surge forward so as to integrate and make humanity a winner:

> विश्व की दुर्बलता बल बने, पराजय का बढ़ता व्यापार।
> हंसाता रहे उसे सविलास, शक्ति का क्रीडामय संचार।।

शक्ति के विद्युत्कण, जो व्यस्त विकल बिखरे हैं हो निरुपाय।
समन्वय उसका करे समस्त, विजभिनी मानवता हो जाय।।

—*Kāmāyanī*, Śraddhā Canto

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NOTES

1. *Śakti or Divine Power (A Historical Study Based on Original Sanskrit Texts),* by Sudhendu Kumar Das. Das carried on his researches during 1923-25 at the School of Oriental Studies, London under L.D. Barnett whose English translation of the *Paramārthasāra* appeared in 1910.
2. *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study* and *Comparative Aesthetics,* Vol. 1: *Indian.* Pandey's studies were initially intended to focus primarily on Abhinavagupta as an aesthetician, the philosophical studies being essentially preparatory. Later on, other aspects became equally important.
3. In fact the whole of Jai Shanker Prasad's literature is surcharged with this insight. Of all his works, the *Kāmāyani* is a poetic reconstruction of the philosophical ethos of Kashmir Śaivism. His brief but thoughtful essays are published under the title *Kāvya aur Kalā tathā Anya Nibandha,* first published in 1933.
4. *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* by Karl H. Potter. Potter intended this paradigm to be both constructive and reconstructive. Western philosophy which elevates rationality at the expense of power is distinguished from the Indian which puts power over rational morality. In Potter's understanding Truth is that recognition of which leads to freedom. *Freedom from* relates to bondage (in the nature of transmigration) caused by attachment and *freedom to* reflects the ability to master freedom, by renouncing fruits, from attachment. Though innovative, this paradigm failed to bring out the actual potential of the *freedom to* because in the ultimate analysis it remained passive, consisting as it did in the renunciation (of fruits). The paradigm was revolutionary in the sense that it addressed, in principle and in concept, the Kashmir Śaivist's formulation of freedom in terms of power, Śakti.
5. "Purity and power among the Brahmans of Kashmir", Alexis Sanderson. The article was written from socio-anthropological perspective rejecting Mauss' views on the category of person, targeting the tantric pandits of Kashmir.
6. "Kāśmīrīya Śaiva Darṣana Kī Kuch Viśeṣatāyeṅ", in *Kalyāṇa: Śivāṅka,* and his Presidential address , captioned *Tantrika Saṁskṛti* on 8th March, 1965 to the *Tantra Sammelana,* Sanskrit University, Varanasi.
7. Op. cit.
8. The tantras, in general, and Kashmir Śaivism in particular, address all these concerns in their treatment of Śakti. Even the 'linguistic' context

is enlarged to the 'semantic' extent affording in fact a novel exegetical orientation to and appropriation of the Mimāṁsā concepts of *niyoga*, *bhāvanā* and *vidhi*. This phenomenon is most forcefully conspicuous in inner convergence that runs through conceptualization of meaning as a self-transcending self-transfiguration of word, whether it be by way of *dhvani* (suggestion) or objective/cosmogonic self-differentiation.

9. वशेषदर्शनेषु इति शाक्ताद्वैतप्रधानेषु, विशेषः शक्तिलक्षणः आत्मनो दर्श्यते।... शुद्धचैतन्यमिति सामान्यदर्शनेषु सर्वोत्तीर्णैकतद्रूपवेदकेषु।–IPVV, III, p. 331.
10. "विसर्गशक्तिः षोडशी कला" इत्येषा हि न सांख्येया नापि वैदान्तिकी दृक् अपितु शैवी एव, विसर्गशक्तिरेव च पारमेश्वरी परमानन्दभूमिबीजम्। – PTV, p. 181.
11. अस्मिन्स्तु सति..... ब्रह्मवादे अविद्यां मायाशक्तीकृत्य...सिध्यति एष जनः। –IPVV, III, p. 405
12. TAV, II, p. 30
13. शक्त्याविष्करणेनेयं प्रत्यभिज्ञोपदर्श्यते। – IPK 1.1.2
14. शक्तिप्रकाशेनेशादिव्यवहारः प्रवर्त्यते। – ibid. 2.3.1.7
15. विशेषदर्शनेषु इति शाक्ताद्वैतप्रधानेषु विशेषः शक्तिलक्षणः ... तुर्य इति एतद्दशासमापत्तिपर्यन्तरूपा अपि तुर्यातीतता तत्रैव उक्ता, व्यतिरेकेण तु शून्यादेरवस्थापने बोधस्य तुर्यातीतता तत्रैव उक्ता.. इति सामान्यदर्शनेषु सर्वोत्तीर्णैकतद्रूपवेदकेषु दर्शितेति सूचयति। – IPVV, III, p. 331
16. इति अव्यतिरेकतुर्यातीतसमता एव। – ibid, p. 328
17. With reference to the IPVV (II, pp. 178-179: ..... ततोऽपि काव्यनाट्यादौ तद्व्यवधानशून्यता तद्व्यवधान-संस्कारानुवेधस्तु। तत्रापि तु तथोदित व्यवधानांशतिरस्क्रियासावधानहृदया लभन्त एव परमानन्दम्।) Prof. K.C. Pandey (vide *Comparative Aesthetics*, Vol. I, pp. 134, 142) connects the higher phase of rasa-experience with *vyatireka-turyātītā* which in all fairness to the systemal cogency ought to be *avyatireka-turyātīta*.
18. अस्मिन्स्तु सति....विज्ञानाद्वयम् आत्मेश्वराभिप्रायेण निरूप्य सिध्यति एष जनः। – IPVV, III, p. 405
19. अस्मिन्स्तु सति आगमेषु द्वैतव्याख्यानमपास्य...सिध्यति एष जनः। – ibid.
20. नापि सिद्धान्तदृष्टिवत् विश्वोत्तीर्णमेव परं तत्त्वं इत्येवंरूपम्। – Sp. S., p. 24
21. नन्यान्या शिवात्। – Pauṣkarāgama 1.39, cited in *Śaiva-siddhānta-darśana*, p. 59; also see pp. 57-58.

    The Siddhāntin, supposedly more faithful to his source āgamas, does not seem always comfortable in his delineation of the precise relationship between Śiva and Śakti. The Kashmir Śaivist formulations are attempts towards removing this ambivalence.
22. प्रथमतः संवित्तत्त्वं भगवता शिवरूपं केषुचिद् आगमेषु सर्वोत्तीर्णताप्राधान्येन, अपरेषु सर्वमयतास्वीकारेण, अन्येषु उभयरूपविस्फारणाय उपदिष्टम्। तत् प्राथमकल्पिके इह उपदेश्ये संविन्मुखेन आदौ अद्वयम् उपदेश्यम्। – IPVV, II, p. 74

23. ऐश्वर्यशक्तेश्च स्वपरविभागप्रतिभासहेतोः....। – ibid., p. 114
24. भगवतः शक्तिविशेषो यन्न्यूनतातारतम्यकृतं...जडत्वम्, यदुत्कर्षतारतम्यकृतं च... प्रवुद्धत्वम्। – ibid., I, p. 270
25. Cf. TA 1.110-111
26. तासामपि च भेदांशन्यूनाधिक्ययोजनम्।
    तत्स्वातन्त्र्यबलादेव शास्त्रेषु परिभाषितम्।। – TA 1.109
27. (i) कुलप्रक्रियायां दूतीमुखेनैव शिष्यस्य ज्ञानप्रतिपादनाम्नायात्। – TAV, II, p. 35
    (ii) कुलप्रक्रियायां हि दूतीमन्तरेण क्वचिदपि कर्मणि नाधिकारः। – ibid., p. 32
28. पूजयेद्भैरवाख्यां योगिनीद्वादशावृताम्। – TA 3.254
29. तादात्म्यप्रतिपत्त्यै हि स्वसंतानं समाश्रयेत्।।
    भुञ्जीत पूजयेच्चक्रं परसंतानिना नहि। – ibid. 4. 268-269
30. प्रविकस्वरमध्यपदा शक्तिः शास्त्रे तथा कथिता।
    तस्यामेव कुलार्थं सम्यक् संचारयेद्गुरुस्तेन।।
    तन्मुख्यचक्रमुक्तं महेशिना योगिनीवक्त्रम्।।
    तत्रैष सम्प्रदायस्तस्मात् संप्राप्यते ज्ञानम्। – ibid. 29.122-125
31. Attention may be drawn to the conceptualizations of *vimarśa* as *visarga*, and *sahṛdayatā* as *vīrya-vikṣobha* and so on.
32. तत एव हि शक्तिसंवर्धनक्रमेण अंतःसंकुचितविमर्शशक्तिसमाकर्षणेन तथैव भोगापवर्गोपयोगिना उपयुज्यमानः परमेश्वरेण सृष्टस्तर्कसंसारः काव्यसंसारवद् अपर एव। विचित्रा हि अमी संसाराः। – IPVV, III, pp. 95-96
33. प्रमातुर्हि शुद्धाशुद्धरूपं वितव्य वक्तव्यम् अध्यात्मविद्यासु अस्यैव अर्थस्य मुख्यत्वेन विस्तारणार्हत्वात्। – IPVV, III, p. 313
34. पूर्णतैव अस्य शक्तिः। – TS, Āh. 4.
35. तयोर्यद्यामलं रूपं स संघट्ट इति स्मृतः। – TA 3.68
36. शक्तिर्हि नाम शक्तिमत एव स्वं रूपम्। – TAV, II, p. 465
37. शक्त्याविष्करण is to be analysed in two ways (i) शक्तेः आविष्करणम् (ष० तत्पु०) and (ii) शक्त्या आविष्करणम् (तृ० तत्पु०) : करण-भाव-साधनत्वेन आविष्क्रियमाणा शक्तिः तत्कृतश्च दृढनिश्चयः। – IPVV, I, p. 87

    Accordingly Abhinavagupta construes *pratyabhijñā* as *jñāna-kriyā-śaktirūpā*. Loc cit.

    Here attention may be drawn to two different, though complementary, interpretations of *āviṣkaraṇa.* In the Pratyabhijñā circles it is rendered into gnostic terminology (i.e. *abhijñānakhyāpana*: IPK Vṛtti on IPK 1.1.3) and in the Spanda echelons into dynamic terms (i.e., *ātmabalaprayatnaviśeṣa:* Sp. P, p. 119 on Sp.K. 36)
38. स्वात्मा महेश्वरः,
    माहेश्वर्यं सर्वशक्तित्वम्,
    सर्वशक्तित्वं (नाम) अहंविमर्शः

39. कर्तरि ज्ञातरि स्वात्मन्यादिसिद्धे महेश्वरे। – IPK 1.1.2

40. आत्मैव ईश्वरत्वात् सर्वशक्तिः। – IPVV, II, p. 37

41. प्रकाशने स्वातन्त्र्यम् अहमिति महत्संरम्भात्मा प्रतिघातशून्यो विमर्शः, तदेव च अस्य सर्वशक्तित्वम्। – ibid., p. 8

42. तेन... अहमिति चमत्कारात्मना महान् ईश्वरः यतो देवस्य एते एव ज्ञानक्रिये... योऽयं विमर्शो नाम। – IPVV, II, p. 435

43. (i) शक्तिमतः शक्तित्वं नाम स्वातन्त्र्यम्। – S.Dṛ., fn. 2, p. 97
(ii)परमेश्वरशक्तिरेव स्वातन्त्र्यापरपर्याया भवति। – *TS*, p. 11

44. स्वस्मिन् तंत्रे वर्तमानः

45. स्वं तनोति विस्तारयति इति। – *Śabda-kalpadruma*, pt. 5, p. 468

46. This is the Śaivist's appropriation of the original Sāṁkhya thesis.

47. इत्थं पुराणशास्त्रादौ शक्तिः सा परमेश्वरी।
निरपेक्षैव कथिता सापेक्षत्वे ह्यनीशता।। – MVV 1-698

48. उक्ता च सैव विश्रान्तिः सर्वापेक्षानिरोधतः।
स्वातन्त्र्यमथ कर्तृत्वं मुख्यमीश्वरतापि च।। – APS 23

49. तत्र कर्तृत्वलक्षणा स्वातन्त्र्यशक्तिः विश्वशक्तिश्रेणीसमाक्षेपेण वर्तते। सैव विमर्शरूपा। – IPVV, I, p. 247

50. Because of its unique formulation we have avoided translating the term. Here *anugraha*, which may be rendered as "post/repeated/total" (*anu*) "acceptance/grasp/reception" (*graha*), needs be distinguished from *anugraha-kṛtya* (i.e. Godly act of dispensing grace) or *anugraha-śakti* (i.e., Godly capacity to grant such dispensation). It also needs be differentiated from twofold division of Godly acts into *anugraha* informing divine manifestation and *nigraha* (also called *vilaya*) encoding all the five Godly acts. एवंरूपप्रथा च अनुग्रहः स्थितिसृष्ट्यवान्तररूप एव च विलय इति कृत्यपञ्चकप्रपञ्चनशक्तिसारो भगवान् इति तात्पर्यार्थः। – IPVV, III, p. 27.

51. परमेश्वरः पंचविधकृत्यमयः सततम् अनुग्रहमय्या परारूपया शक्त्या आक्रान्तो वस्तुतो अनुग्रहैकात्मैव, नहि शक्तिः शिवात् भेदमामर्शयेत्। – PTV, p. 3

52. तत्तदेषणीयाद्युपाधिवशेन नानात्वेन व्यवह्रियते। – TAV, II, p. 108

53. भेदैश्चतुर्भिरेकस्यां शक्तौ यत्क्रमणं क्रमात्।
सृष्टिस्थितिलयानाख्यैः स क्रमः परिवर्तितः।। – M.P. (S), p. 45

54. स्वस्वरूपापोहनात्माख्यातिमयी निषेधव्यापाररूपा। – PSV, pp 10-11

55. Śakti or Divine Power, p. 382

56. स्वशक्तिप्रचयोऽस्य विश्वम्। – S.Sū 3.30

57. अधिका शक्तिर्न्यूनशक्तिनिबन्धिनी। – IPVV, I, p. 287

58. काचित्तु शक्तिरनन्ताः शक्तीराक्षिप्यैव वर्तमाना नेदीयसी भगवतः, अन्यास्तु दूराल्पतमा दवीयस्तमा इति उपासना विचित्रा आगमेषु दर्शिताः। – IPVV, III, p. 265

59. भेदाभैदौ हि शक्तिता। – TA 1.120

60. भेदाभेदप्राधान्येतरताकृतस्तु अत्र विवेकः। वस्तुतः चिदात्मैव तथा भाति इति अक्रमतैव अत्र इत्युक्तम्। .... इहैव च स्वतन्त्रशिवाद्वयदर्शने एकस्य अर्थस्य अनेकत्वं संगच्छते। – Sp.S., pp. 9-10

61. One must understand, there are two tiers or two stages to this differentiation, namely the objective and the subjective. The first tier refers to our apprehending an object, a manifestation as a configuration, or a sort of gestalt, to borrow a term from psychology. The second tier refers to the subjective synthesis and repose. Though the two are invariably present in every cognition, the reference is to the first tier in the present case.

62. In pragmatic usage.

63. तेन अतिरिक्तानतिरिक्तरूपत्वमेव तत्त्वं ज्ञानादीनाम्। निर्भासनसारं हि वस्तु। तथा यद्भाति तदेव शक्तिरिति संरम्भरूपतया, धर्म इति सिद्धरूपाकारभेदतया, गुण इति तत्परतन्त्ररूपतया, व्यापार इति च पूर्वापररूपतया व्यपदिश्यते। – IPVV, II, p. 269.

64. अत एवाविकल्पत्वध्रौव्यप्राभववैभवैः।
अन्यैर्वा शक्तिरूपत्वाद् धर्मैः स्वसमवायिभिः।। – T.A. 1.198

65. एवं वैकल्पिकी भूमिः शाक्ते कर्तृत्ववेदने। – T.A. 1.218

66. उच्चाररहितं वस्तु चेतसैव विचिन्तयन्।
यं समावेशमाप्नोति शाक्तः सोऽत्राभिधीयते।। – MVT 2.22

67. काव्यार्थविषये हि प्रत्यक्षकल्पसंवेदनोदये रसोदयः इत्युपाध्यायाः। – A.Bh., I, p. 290

68. तस्मादनुव्यवसायात्मकं कीर्तनं रूषितविकल्पसंवेदनं नाट्यम्। – A.Bh., I, p. 37
Here *anuvyavasāya* is conceived differently from its namesake in the Nyāya.

69. This explains the 'pure determinate' (*śuddha-vikalpātmaka*) character of rasa-experience. It is not 'determinate' (*savikalpaka*) as Larson tends to take it while scrutinizing affinity of rasa-experience with the absolutic relish (*brahmāsvādasavidha*) vide "The aesthetic (*rasāsvāda*) and the religious (*brahmāsvāda*) in Abhinavagupta's Kashmir Śaivism", p. 378

70. This is a conceptualization different from that of manifestation (*ābhāsana*).

71. स्वप्रकाशस्य हि परस्य (i.e., अन्यस्य) प्रकाशस्य परकर्तृका व्यक्तिरेव उपाधिः, शक्तिः पुनरभिव्यक्तैव तदञ्जने उपायः। – TAV, II, p. 465

72. "तत्र त्वर्पकाद् उपाधेस्तदाकारत्वम्, चित्तत्त्वस्यैव तु निजैश्वर्यात्।" – cited in TAV, II, p. 424

73. तेन उभयथापि ज्ञानशक्तिपदं तत्र तत्र विग्रहीतव्यम् – ज्ञानमेव शक्तिः तत्र च अस्य शक्तिरिति। – IPVV, I, p. 288

74. अग्निः शक्तिः, संदहति इति च अबाधितप्रत्ययाभासाद् आभाससारपरमार्थवादिना शक्तिश्च क्रिया चेति उभयमपि उपगम्यम्। – loc. cit.

75. शक्तिः शक्ता करोतीति तु शक्तेः शक्तिमदात्मना सृष्टिरिति शक्तेः शक्त्यन्तरयोगे अनवस्था इत्यपि न किंचित्, भावस्वभावानधिकत्वाच्च। – loc cit.

76. तदियं शक्तिर्भावस्वरूपमुपनीय आसीना शक्तिरुच्यते, न तु पृथगवभासा इति स्वरूप-सहकारि-लक्षणैव (स्वरूपसहकारिलक्षणैव, emended to स्वरूप-सहकारि-लक्षणैव) उभयी पदार्थस्थितिः शक्तिरित्यपि न कांचिदस्मन्मते क्षतिमावहति। – loc cit.

77. भगवतः शक्तिविशेषो यन्न्यूनतारतम्यकृतं स्थावरान्तं जडत्वम्, यदुत्कर्षतारतम्यकृतं च परमशिवान्तं प्रबुद्धत्वमिति वक्ष्यामः। – IPVV, I, 270

78. बहुत्वपरामर्शप्रधानतायां शक्तिव्यवहारः, तदेकपरामर्शप्रधानत्वे तद्वद्व्यवहारः। – ibid., p. 287; also cf;

    बहुशक्तित्वमप्यस्य तच्छक्त्यैवावियुक्तता।।
    शक्तिश्च नाम भावस्य स्वं रूपं मातृकल्पितम्।
    तेनाद्वयः स एवापि शक्तिमत्परिकल्पने।। – TA 1.68-69

79. परमेश्वरशास्त्रे हि न च काणादिदृष्टिवत्।
    शक्तीनां धर्मरूपाणामाश्रयः कोऽपि कथ्यते।। – ibid. 1.158

80. स च तच्छक्तिसंयोजन-वियोजन-विश्रमण-तिरस्करण-प्रथनादिस्वाच्छन्द्यसारतया महेश्वररूपो न तु दहन-पचना-ऽऽस्वेदनादिशक्त्याश्रयजड- प्रायहुतवहस्थानीयः। – IPVV, II, p. 338

81. शक्तिश्च शक्तिमांश्चैव पदार्थद्वयमुच्यते।
    शक्त्योऽस्य जगत्कृत्स्नं शक्तिमांस्तु महेश्वरः।। – attributed to the *Mataṅgaśāstra*

82. शिवप्राप्त्युपायतया शक्तिरेव अतश्च शक्तिशक्तिमतो उपायोपेयभावात्मा क्रमः। – IPVV, I, p. 114.

83. Vide IPK 1.5.18

84. यतः प्रत्यगात्मा वृत्तौ परमेश्वर इति कथितः, ततश्चितिशक्तिरिह परा कर्तृता मन्तव्या, विपर्ययेण वा हेतुहेतुमत्ता योज्या। फलं हि तुल्यम्। – IPVV, II, p. 218

85. संविद्दर्पणप्रतिबिम्बरूपे भावकलापे अभ्युपगम्यमाने शक्तिव्यक्तिविभागः संविच्छक्तिचित्रितनिमेषणोन्मेषण ।परमार्थ उपपद्यते न अन्यथा। – ibid., p. 312

86. येऽपि प्रतिबिम्बरूपा ग्राहकास्तेषां चिद्भाग शिव एवेति उपपाद्य अचिद्भागोऽपि वेद्यात्मा तच्छक्तिरेव। – Ibid., III, p. 271.

87. तत्सर्वं क्रोडीकृत्य अवतिष्ठमाना; न तु शक्तिमद्रूपपरमशिवदशा इव अनुन्मिषितग्राह्यग्राहकादिवैचित्र्या, अतएव भगवतः स्वाभोगं प्रति य आस्वादश्चमत्कारो निजाभोगपरामर्शात्मा, तन्मयी। – IPVV, II, p. 190; तया च योऽसावानन्दमहिमा परस्वातन्त्र्यात्मा उल्लासनीयः, सा भगवतः परा वागिति दर्शितम्। – op.cit., p. 197

88. एकामर्शस्वभावत्वे शब्दराशिः स भैरवः।
    आमृश्यच्छायया योगात्सैव शक्तिश्च मातृका।। – T.A. 3.198

89. Cf. Koṣa, vol.2, p. 650

90. भेदे हि शक्तिः किं कार्यं करोत्युत च शक्तिमान्। – S. Dr. 1.4.

91. पृथक्सिद्धं वस्तु वस्त्वन्तरं भिनत्ति, नहि शक्तेः शक्तिमदतिरेकेण पृथक्सिद्धिरेवास्ति इति किं केन भेद्यम्। – T.A.V., II, p. 111

92. ....सापेक्षत्वे ह्यनीशता। – MVV 1.698
93. भेदस्थितेः शक्तिमतः शक्तित्वं नापदिश्यते। – IPK 4.1.5
94. अभेदात् इति। प्रतिबिम्बे हि भेदोऽसन्नपि आभाति तावत्; शक्तौ तदपि नेति आशयः। – IPVV, III, p. 270
95. सा चैषा प्रतिभा तत्तत्पदार्थक्रमरूषिता।
    अक्रमानन्तचिद्रूपः प्रमाता स महेश्वरः।। – IPK 1.7.1
96. प्रतिभातत्त्वं शक्तिलक्षणम्। – N.T.U., I, p. 191
97. नौमि चित्प्रतिभां देवीं परां भैरवयोगिनीम्। – TA 1.2
98. शक्तिः कवित्वबीजरूपः। – K.P.
99. प्रमातृत्व-माहेश्वर्याभ्याम् उपचिता लब्धपरिपोषा, तत एव उपचयवलादेव उचितः पुंस्त्वनिर्देशः। – IPVV, II, p. 341

    It may be noted that, nourished by *pramātṛtva* and *māheśvarya* i.e. (*jñātṛtva* and *kartṛtva*) Pratibhā (normally used in feminine gender in Sanskrit diction) has been delineated here in masculine gender as Maheśvara. Abhinavagupta means to say that gender attributions are logically inconsequential, at the most they reflect linguistic norms and compulsions. In this equation as enunciated by Abhinavagupta, one might note a veiled hint towards seminal formulation of twofold Pratibhā into *bhāvayitrī* (appreciative) and *kārayitrī* (creative) respectively. This might be construed as a metaphysical grounding provided by Abhinavagupta in terms of subjectivity (*pramātṛtvā/jñātṛtva*) and agentiality par excellence (*māheśvarya/kartṛtva*) for the later poetic category of Pratibhā in its twofold conceptualization.
100. या सा शक्तिर्जगद्धातुः कथिता समवायिनी।
     इच्छात्वं तस्य सा देवि सिसृक्षोः प्रतिपद्यते।।
     सैकापि सत्येनकत्वं यथा गच्छति तच्छृणु। – MVT 3.5-6
     एवमेषा द्विरूपापि पुनर्भेदैरनन्तताम्।
     अर्थोपाधिवशाद्याति चिन्तामणिरिवेश्वरी।।
     तत्र तावत्समापन्ना मातृभावं विभिद्यते।। – ibid., 3.8-9
101. शक्तिशक्तिमतोर्यद्वदभेदः सर्वदा स्थितः।
     अतस्तद्धर्मधर्मित्वात् पराशक्तिः परात्मनः।।
     न वह्नेर्दाहिका शक्तिः व्यतिरिक्ता विभाव्यते।
     केवलं ज्ञानसत्तायां प्रारम्भोऽयं प्रवेशने।। – V.Bh. 18-19
102. यथा न्यग्रोधवीजस्थः शक्तिरूपो महाद्रुमः।
     तथा हृदयवीजस्थं जगदेच्चराचरम्।। – PT 24
103. सानन्दा तु पराशक्तिर्निरानन्दस्तु परः शिवः। – cited in Koṣa, p. 659
104. Such as the *Kālikākrama, Kramasadbhāva* and *Jayadratha-yāmala*. My understanding of these Krama āgamas is based on the references made to them in the printed Śaiva works and the valuable studies by Braj Vallabha Dwivedi, Dyczkowski and Sanderson.

105. इच्छा शक्तिरुमा कुमारी। – S. Sū 1.13
106. स्वशक्तिप्रचयोऽस्य विश्वम्। – S. Sū 3.30
107. शुद्धतत्त्वसंधानाद्वाऽपशुशक्ति। – ibid. 1.16
शक्तिसंधाने शरीरोत्पत्तिः। – ibid. 1.19
108. सिद्धः स्वतन्त्रभावः। – Ibid 3.13
109. Vide Ś.Sū 3.9-11: नर्तक आत्मा; रङ्गोऽन्तरात्मा; प्रेक्षकाणीन्द्रियाणि।
110. For details see *K.T.*, pp. 104-108
111. श्रयेत्स्वातन्त्र्यशक्तिं स्वां सा श्रीकाली परा कला। – cited in Ś. Śū. V. on Ś.Sū. 3.13
112. Namely emanation, sustenance, withdrawal and rest in each of the three phases of rise, maintenance and dissolution.
113. एकं स्वरूपरूपं प्रसरस्थितिविलयभेदतस्त्रिविधम्।
प्रत्येकमुदयसंस्थितिलयविश्रमश्चतुर्विधं तदपि।। – cited in TAV, III, p. 197
114. For historical and other details see K.T., 111-122
115. Kṣemarāja and Maheśvarānanda attribute the authorship of the kārikās to Vasugupta himself.
116. तदाऽस्याकृत्रिमो धर्मो ज्ञत्व-कर्तृत्वलक्षणः।
यतस्तदीप्सितं सर्वं जानाति च करोति च।। – Sp.K.10
117. यतः स्वतन्त्रता तस्य सर्वत्रेयमकृत्रिमा। – ibid., 7
118. गुणादिस्पन्दनिष्यन्दाः सामान्यस्पन्दसंश्रयात्।
लब्धात्मलाभाः सततं स्युः। .... ।। – ibid., 19
119. इति वा यस्य संवित्तिः क्रीडात्वेनाखिलं जगत्।
स पश्यन् सततं युक्तो जीवन्मुक्तो न संशयः।। – ibid., 30
120. यथा ह्यर्थोऽस्फुटो दृष्टः सावधानेऽपि चेतसि।
भूयः स्फुटतरो भाति स्वबलोद्योगभावितः।। – ibid. 36
This was a formulation whose impact could be seen later in the Abhinavan hermeneutics of recognition in his commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka* (1.8).
121. ग्लानिर्विलुण्ठिका देहे तस्याश्चाज्ञानतः सृतिः।
तदुन्मेषविलुप्तं चेत् कुतः सा स्यादहेतुका।। – Sp.K. 40
122. तं शक्तिचक्रविभवप्रभवं शंकरं स्तुमः। – Sp.K. 1; तदा त्वेकत्र संरूढस्तदा तस्य लयोद्भवौ।
नियच्छन् भोक्तृतामेति ततश्चक्रेश्वरो भवेत्।। – ibid., 51
123. अन्यच्च यैः शक्तिवादिभिः ... इत्येवमभिधानात् शैवदर्शनस्थितैरपि सद्भिः। – S.Dṛ.V., p. 101
124. स्वभावस्थितिं मुक्त्वा, तस्मान्नान्यास्ति सा दशा।
शिवे यस्या न वाग्रूपं सूक्ष्ममप्राप्तसंनिधि।। – cited in Ś.Dṛ.V., pp 101-102
125. श्रीमद्भट्टप्रद्युम्नपादैः संविच्छक्तिप्रसरमात्रतां षट्त्रिंशत्तत्त्वमुपपाद्य यत्वितत्य विकल्पप्रतिभासनस्य स्वातन्त्र्यमुदितं तत्र...। – IPVV, II, p. 337

126. सैव किंचिदुच्छूनता कथ्यते भट्टप्रद्युम्नेन तत्त्वगर्भे। – cited in S.Dr.V., p. 16
127. शक्तिशक्तिमतामुक्ता सर्वत्र ह्यभेदिता। – Ś.Dṛ. 3.65
128. सुसूक्ष्मशक्तित्रितयसामरस्येन वर्तते। – S.Dṛ. 1.5
129. शिवः करोतु निजया नमः शक्त्या ततात्मने। – ibid. 1.1
130. Cf. "Śivadṛṣṭi by Somānanda", pp. 16-22
131. Cf. *The Doctrine*, pp. 66-67
132. Loc. cit.
133. यदा तु तस्य चिद्धर्मविभवामोदजृम्भया।।
     विचित्ररचनानानाकार्यसृष्टिप्रवर्तने।
     भवत्युन्मुखिता चित्ता सेच्छायाः प्रथमा तुटिः।। – S.Dṛ. 1.7-8
     आमोदः = चमत्कारः Ś.Dṛ.V.
134. एतेष्वेव प्रसङ्गेषु सर्वशक्तिविलोलता। – S.Dṛ. 1.11
135. यथा नृपः सार्वभौमः प्रभावामोदभावितः।।
     क्रीडन्करोति पादातिधर्मांस्तद्धर्मधर्मतः।
     तथा प्रभुः प्रमोदात्मा क्रीडत्येवं तथा तथा।। – ibid. 1.37-38
136. अथेदानीं प्रवक्तव्यं यथा सर्वं शिवात्मकम्।
     नाशक्तो विद्यते कश्चिच्छक्तं वस्त्वेव। – ibid. 4.1, cited by Kaw, op. cit, p. 99
137. शक्त्याविष्करणेनेयं प्रत्यभिज्ञोपदर्श्यते। – IPK 1.1.3
     Śakti is *asādhāraṇaprabhāva,* and *āviṣkaraṇa* is *abhijñāna-khyāpana* according to Utpala's *Vṛtti:* असाधारणप्रभावाभिज्ञानख्यापनेन दृढनिश्चयरूपं प्रत्यभिज्ञानमात्रम् उपदिश्यते। (on IPK 1.1.3)
138. शक्तिप्रकाशेनेशादिव्यवहारः प्रवर्त्यते। – IPK 2.3.17; शक्तिप्रकाशेन शुद्धस्वातन्त्र्यादिहेतुप्रदर्शनेन Utpala's Vṛtti on ibid.
139. इत्थमाविष्कृतशक्त्यभिज्ञानम् आत्मानम् अनन्तज्ञानक्रियाशक्तिनिभृतम् ईश्वरं प्रत्यभिज्ञाय – Vṛtti on IPK 4.1.15
140. परिज्ञातेश्वरभावस्य – Vṛtti on IPK 4.1.12; ईशशक्त्यैव अपरिज्ञातया – ibid., on IPK 4.1.9
141. चित्तत्त्वमेव विश्वरूपम् अतोऽतिरिक्तस्य अनुपपत्तेः ... अस्यैव ज्ञानादिकाः शक्तयः। – ibid. on IPK 1.3.7
142. अस्य प्रमातुरेतद्बोधमयतामापन्नस्य ज्ञानं तच्छक्तिसमावेशलक्षणम् उच्यते। – ibid. on 3.2.12
143. क्षेत्रज्ञस्यापि ईश्वरशक्त्यैव विकल्पारंभ इति तद्दशायामपि परिज्ञातेश्वरभावस्य... महेश्वरतैव। – ibid. on 4.12
144. Cf. सा च ईश्वरशक्तिः स्वात्ममात्रविश्रान्तिविरोधाय मायाव्यपदेश्या। – ibid. on 4.9-10;
     उक्ता च सैव विश्रान्तिः सर्वापेक्षानिरोधतः।
     वातन्त्र्यमथ कर्तृत्वं मुख्यमीश्वरतापि च।। – APS 23.
145. यस्योन्मेषनिमेषाभ्यां जगतः प्रलयोदयौ।
     तं शक्तिचक्रविभवप्रभवं शंकरं स्तुमः।। – Sp.K. 1

146. (i) प्रकाशमानं विश्वमस्य शक्तयः, (ii) शक्तिचक्रस्य इन्द्रियवर्गस्य, (iii) शक्तिचक्रस्य करणेश्वरीचक्रस्य, (iv) शक्तिचक्रं मन्त्रगणो मुद्रासमूहश्च, (v) शक्तिचक्रेण दीक्षानुग्रहध्येयसमापत्त्यादिना, (vi) (व्याख्यातेन च शक्तिचक्रविभवेन....दीप्तिः) यस्य साधकचित्तस्य, (viia) शक्तयो ब्राह्यादिदेव्यो ब्रह्मादिकारणमाला च, (viib) तस्यैव शक्तिचक्रस्य (viii) शक्तिचक्रं खेचरी-गोचरी-दिक्चरी-भूचर्यादिः बाह्यान्तरताभेदभिन्नो नानायोगिनीगणः, तदुपलक्षितो वीरव्रातश्च, (ix) श्रीवामेश्वर्याधिष्ठितानि खेचरी-गोचरी-दिक्चरी-भूचरी-चक्राणि आन्तराणि बाह्यानि च, (x) शक्तिचक्रस्य आगमसम्प्रदायप्रसिद्ध नानादेवतापरमार्थस्य रागद्वेषविकल्पादिप्रत्ययग्रामस्य, तथा देहाश्रिततत्तद्देवतापरमार्थनानाधात्वादिगणस्य, (xi) शक्तिचक्रस्य स्वातन्त्र्याद्वयनिजमहाप्रकाशानुप्रवेशकारिस्वमरीचिनिचयस्य। – Sp.S., pp. 15-23

147. एवमनेन श्लोकभागेन... विश्वोत्तीर्णो विश्वमयश्च उत्तमाकुलत्रिकाद्याम्नायोपदिशा स्वस्वभाव एव शंकरः इति उपपादितम्। – Sp.S., p. 24.

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G.C. Nayak

Śakti Cult, Tantricism and Saptaśatī Caṇḍī

The Śakta cult with its Tantric paraphernalia, even if it belongs to our own heritage most certainly and unambiguously, has certain apparently weird, a strange non-conformist, character about it from the very beginning and even throughout its development in the course of time. That is why its reference as an intrinsic part of, and an amalgamation in various forms in our socio-cultural heritage has been looked at with a good deal of suspicion throughout, with the consequence of some sort of alienation or the other being the fate of the Śākta-Tantric movement in our cultural history. What a great revolutionary movement it has been, and yet how simultaneously intrinsic it is to our socio-cultural heritage, can only be revealed to us gradually, as I proceed with my humble efforts at a proper understanding of this movement in the sequel.

The deep insights of Tantra philosophy have been usually either ignored or misconstrued, perhaps because of its origin in the hoary past having a tribal base, by superficial enquirers and scholars of doubtful authenticity in this area. It is also a matter of great regret that very often during its development the system has fallen into the hands of charlatans and conmen who have deliberately misused it for their nefarious profession. So one should be wary at the outset while dealing with such a sensitive area as Tantra, and must fight shy of a crude presentation of the system as some sort of mere magical formula meant for bringing about prosperity for oneself and/or the downfall and damnation of the enemy. It is astonishing to see how dictionaries, compiled in cities like New York even in the later part of the 20th century, talk of the Tantras as containing "magical formulae for the attainment of magical or quasi-magical power",[1] alongside a casual reference of course to the workship of Śakti, the Mother of the universe. It is no wonder therefore that the Tantric system throughout has consistently been condemned as something weird and suspicious in its magical aspect, while its valuable philosophical insights are not properly understood and appreciated, and are rather lost in the oblivion of the crude practices of magic. It is high time that we make efforts on all sides at bringing to the fore the salient features of the philosophy of Śakti cult and Tantricism to counter the opposite forces, if not for any other purpose, that have brought a bad name to this system and thereby have done great harm to our socio-cultural heritage.

The philosophy involved here, which is the main driving and guiding spirit of the Tāntric movement, is as a matter of fact a typical philosophy involving the sentiments and the concerns of the common man, which I would designate as the common-istic philosophy, to be carefully distinguished of course from any form of communistic idea owing its origin to Karl Marx and his followers. In any case, in order to have a clear perception of what this common-istic philosophy is all about, we must have a clear conception of certain broad features of this movement of which Śakti worship is at the centre. What is important to note here is that the female power is not only given its due here as against the trends in the partriarchical form of society with which we are usually associated, but it is also worshipped as the supreme power without which any creation or creativity is simply incomprehensible. This feature is brought out very well in the first stanza *Saudaray Laharī* of Ādi Śaṅkara, where the great Advaitin who is supposed to be the very incarnation of Lord Śiva (Śankaraḥ Śankaraḥ sākṣāt, being a well-known popular saying about Ādi Śaṅkara), had to admit the supremacy of Śakti (the female power) without which *Śiva* is reduced to mere *Śava* or a dead corpse as it were- "Śivaḥ śaktyā yukto yadi bnavati śaktaḥ prabhavituṃ, nacedevaṃ devo na khalu kuśalaḥ spanditumapi".

Here is a sort of revaluation of the old values of a patriarchical order where the male member is supposed to be the supreme authority, and the point which I want to make in this context is that this śakti cult and the Tantric movement certainly bring about certain freshness, a sort of novelty, in looking at our old order. Such freshness and novelty in outlook and approach is not entirely unknown to our age-old structure, the heritage that has come down to us from the

Vedic days and even beyond that from the pre-vedic era, may be, from the days of the Harappān civilization. The *Bhagavad Gītā*, one of the most significant texts in our tradition, is a burning example of this, of bringing about revolution in some form or the other and promoting some sort of revaluation of old values in the context of our own heritage and culture. The common-istic approach so very significantly evident in the Śākta-Trantric tradition also promotes such revaluation of the old values, a revaluation which is virtually a revolution, so to say, in our social order and thinking, because of which this tradition itself has been subject to so much of misunderstanding and criticism. The uncommon power vested in the male supremacy of the social fabric, the autonomy of the male *qua* male, is subjected to revision, revaluation and sometimes to trenchant criticism under the female-domination in the Śakti cult; this needs to be noted here with care in the first instance.

Let us now examine some other features prevalent here which are rather inbuilt in this movement. Casteism in all forms and designation, it needs to be noted, is simply anathema for a Tantric Sādhak or a Kaula, as he is called, for here there is no superior or inferior class in the manner in which we have been so thoroughly acquainted in the context of *Varṇāśrama dharma*, as it is popularly understood or presented in our social framework.

A Brāhmin cannot be regarded as superior by birth here nor can a Caṇḍāla (the outcaste sweeper) be taken as belonging to an inferior class in any way. This is brought out so well in the following stanza, well-known in the Tantric literature, which needs to be highlighted *vis-a-vis* the Varṇa dharma that pervades almost the whole of our tradition: "Pravṛtte Bhairavī cakre sarve varṇā dvijātaya. h, Nivṛtte Bhairavī cakre sarve varṇā pṛthak pṛthak". In the context of the tantric practices, as they are carried on under the guidance of a Guru or the Master, there is no distinction of one class (varṇa)from the other, for all classes are to be treated as respectable Brāhmins there, whereas when the tantric practices are over, the distinction of class once again holds good. This idea once again points to a thorough going revolution in our thought-structure alongwith the consequent revolution in the social fabric too in so far as it is influenced by that thought-structure, and it is common-istic in its spirit out and out. No varṇa or class is intrinsically superior, and no varṇa is inferior either; there is nothing extraordinary or uncommon, talent wise, in a Brāhmin simply because he is born to a Brāhmin family, nor is a Caṇḍāla to be condemned for ever as a fellow who has been inexorably cursed by his birth.

The third feature of the Tantric movement which, I think, I should emphasize is that there is a deliberate tendency to be found here to transcend all conceptual dichotomies such as, good-evil, truth-falsehood, love-hatred beautiful-ugly, even living-non-living (jīva and śava) and natural-unnatural and the like. Such conceptual transcendence and trans-valuation of values is an intrinsic feature of the Indian cultural heritage in general in may ways. It is evident even in the concept of jīvanmukti of Vedānta and also of nirvāṇa in Buddhism. The well-known stanzas as such as, "nistraiguṇye pathi vicarato ko vidhiḥ ko niṣedhaḥ", "Bhedābheda sapadi galitau puṇyapāpe viśīrṇe", "Na nirvāṇasya saṅsārāt kincidasti viśeṣaṇam" etc. point to some sort of transcendence at the level of the highest realization of the Truth of Tattva. Even the Mahābhārata's well-known stanza, "Tyaja dharmamadharmaṃ ca, ubhe satyānṛte tyaja etc." points to a similar transcendence. At another place, during my discussion, I have gone to the extent of designating our culture as a *culture of transcendence* from this point of view. But this transcendence is manifest so much so both in theory and practice in Tantricism as nowhere else in our tradition; it has been so shockingly conspicuous here in Tantric practices that it has at times also crossed the dichotomy of the so called decency-indecency. It takes all sorts to make our world; we can't ignore anything, but we have to take note of them all and yet transcend the dichotomies that bind us.

Panca makāra sādhanā, as it is called, where meat, fish, liquor, sexual indulgence etc. are apparently encouraged in the worship of Śakti, points to a deliberate transcendence of ordinary dichotomy of good and evil, the crudely ethical and unethical, in our conceptual framework that governs our daily life and conduct. Even where it is taken literally, we must remember that it is not intended to promote promiscuous enjoyment of sex in excess but to transcend, rather sublimate, the sex-urge through its acceptance as a simple fact of life without any hatred or perversion. As has been rightly stated by a Tantric scholar, "Some people think that the thought of sex itself is something unholy and impure. It is this erroneous attitude against which Tantric combats".[2] The same scholar points out further, "The tantric sādhanā is meant to cure or neutralise sex of its poison, it is not meant for bhoga. In the Kaula-sādhanā the actual sex act is done not with a feeling of bhoga but with a feeling of offering it as worship to the Deity; it is done as a religious act and not for sensual gratification".[3] It is significant that the *Kulārṇava Tantra* ridicules the idea of getting liberation through sexual indulgence with a typical sarcasm, "In that case all those who indulge in sex with women should stand liberated".[4] As a matter of fact, the Tantric sādhak has a great reverence for women, which is manifest in Kumari Pūjanam that is a part and parcel of Kulācara or Kaula Sādhanā. *Saptaśatī Caṇḍī* declares that all women are different manifestations of the Goddess Durga ("striyaḥ samastāḥ sakalā jagatsu"). It is, therefore, no wonder that the great Advaita thinker of the 20th century, Radhakrishnan, acknowledges that the Tantra "is famous for its reverence for women, who are regarded as forms of the divine mother".[5]

Stanzas such as

"pītvā pītvā punaḥ pītvā yāvat patati
bhūtale, patitvā ca punaḥ pītvā
punar janma na vidyate"

are certainly notorious and provocative, and yet their symbolic significance is never to be lost sight of by the true sādhak who drinks deep at the source of nectar of Brahma randhra in the Sahasrāra Cakra in his/her uninterrupted yogic mediation.

Let us seriously concentrate for a while on the following well-known stanza from Sādhak Ramprasad where there is a positive invocation to immerse ourselves whole heartedly in our innermost being with the utterance of Kali, the Goddess who was the Iṣṭadevī of Ramprasad as well as of Ramakrishna, both of whom were great Tantrics setting standards for us through their respective practices where crude forms of Tantricism have given way to the highest form of realization through bhakti (devotion) to the mother of the entire universe. It is a case of Sahaja Sādhanā, if I may be permitted to say so, in case of both these dedicated souls who transcended crude dichotomy of good and evil through their sādhanā. The stanza to which I would like to refer in this context runs as follows: "Ḍūb de re man kālī vale, hṛdi Ratnākarer agādh jalẹ Ratnākar nay śūnya kakhan, du-cār ḍūde dhan nāmele, Tumi dam-sāmarthe ek ḍube jāo, kula kuṇḍalinir kule". I wonder if its highly spiritual implications are not lying inherent in the apparently foppish stanza in Sankrit referred to earlier, viz. "pītvā pītvā, punaḥ pītvā etc". Similar is the case with matsya, māṁsa, maithuna (sex act) etc, each one of which is taken at best as having some symbolic or figurative significance or the other. "Maithuna" for example, we are told, "means that the sādhaka has no more a separate existence other than the all-embracing Reality. Though 'maithuna', iliterally means 'sexual intercourse', in the Siddha tradition, it signified the union of kuṇḍalini śakti with Śiva existing in the sahasrāra".[6] It has been rightly pointed out that "the employment of sex imagery is frequent in the tantric lore. It works both ways, making it adorable and making it abominable, although sex is employed in tantra not for direct gratification but for reversal and restraint".[7]

What is important to note here is that some sort of transcendence on the part of the sādhaka is fixed as the goal of realization where one is not tied to the usual dichotomy of good and evil. The same is true of the following stanza where bhoga and mokṣa i.e. indulgence in sensual pleasures and liberation, are described as belonging to the same order of reality, as it were, pointing to a state realized by the Tantric sādhaks of Śrī Sundarī, where simultaneously two mutually opposed values are realized. "Yatrāsti bhogo na tatrāsti mokṣo, yatrāsti mokṣo na tatrāsti bhogah, Śrī Sundarī sādhana-tatparāṇāṃ bhogaśca mokṣaśea karastha eva". As the *Kulārnava Tantra,* 2.24 points out, "Bhogo yogāyate sākṣāt pātakaṃ sukṛtāyate, Mokṣāyate ca saṅsāraḥ kuladharme Kuleśvarī". That is why, in my opinion, Tantra as a system takes the concerns of the common man into consideration and finds out ways and means to transcend the dichotomy of pleasure and suffering in a typical Tantric realization. We are constantly swayed by dichotomy of values and its transcendence is the goal of Tantric realization. Even love and hatred are transcended when the dead man's corpse is not regarded as an object of hatred (jugupsā) in *śava sādhanā.* True, in certain cases such sādhanā has been reduced to sheer mockery of transcendence at the hands of the lesser mortals who are out to rejoice in perversion of some sort or the other. But it need not degrade itself to such perversions and has never been made so at the hands of the noble souls practising Tantra. It is therefore understandable why the *Kutārṇavaantra* cautions that the kala practices be protected from the morally depraved persons (pasus), as one guards one's wealth from the thieves. "Yathā rakṣati corebhyo dhanadhāṇyādikaṃ priye, uladharmaṃ tathā evi paśubhyah wirekṣ ayet".

Here I will give an example from the writing of an eminent Tantric sādhak of Orissa, Pranabananda Tripathy, who as a matter of fact is Tantra Vidya vacaspati of a high order; he has the following words to say about śava sādhanā (here, I am not going into the details of description of his own experience, for this would make my work unduly long). "The whole ritual", says Tripathy, "is perhaps meant to eliminate fear and attachment and some avarices from the mind of the Tantric to make him fit for achieving some control over Time. Elimination of fear and the like becomes easier in a graveyard than in a closed protected room. So also a sense of mundane uselessness pervades whereby the mind gets easy opportunities to understand the nature of Time".[8] An exhortation to transcend the dichotomies of our daily life of attachment, fear, avarice, love, hatred and normal ritualistic practices is evident in the following song from Sādhak Rāmprasād which needs a special mention here; this particular song was one of the dearest to the heart of Sri Rama Krishna Paramahaṁsa who used to request Naren (Swami Vivekananda in later days) to sing the same before him from time to time.

"Gayā gaṅgā Prabhāsādi Kāśi Kānei Kevā cāy, Kāli Kāli Kāli vale a japā yadi phurāy. Trisandhyā je vale Kāli sandhyā pūjā se ki cāy, sandhyā tār sandhāne phire kavu sandhi nāhi pāy". The idea is that if one is totally engrossed in his/her devotion to the mother Goddess Kāli, he/she need not go on a holy pilgrimage nor is it necessary on his/her part to be engaged in any ritualistic practice either.

Now, very naturally, a question would come to the mind of any learner or enquirer regarding the indigenous character of all this in the Śakti Cult and Tantricism. Are all these indigenous too, and an intrinsic part of our cultural heritage coming down to us from the hoary past? It may not be the case, I would humbly submit in respect of its developed form in which we have met or are likely to come across the Śakti cult in the recent past or even today. That would mean, contrary to expectation, there has been sheer stagnancy in the movement and a virtual death of the cult after a while, at a certain stage of its development. But our cultural heritage, as is well-known, has never been static; it has been always a dynamic and living culture throughout the ages through which it has progressed. This is true also in the case of Śākta worship in different forms. Acknowledgement of the supremacy or at least the importance of the female power has always been a feature of our civilization, though it is also true that it has been subdued beyond recognition by male domination from time to time.

Radhakrishnan traces the Śakti cult to the *Ṛgveda* itself. "The cult of Śakti" says Radhakrishnan, "finds its beginning in the Ṛgveda. In one of the Hyans Śakti is represented as the embodiment of power, 'the supporter of the earth living in heaven'. She is the supreme power 'by which the universe is upheld', 'the great mother of the devotees (suvratānāṃ), and soon became identified with 'Uma of Golden hue' of the Kena Upaniṣad".[9] In any case, this points to the beginning of the Śākta influence in our civilisation from the very beginning, but it was not static and went on developing in multiple forms and directions in a cultural milieu that was certainly a living one. Take the case of this entire eastern belt, Assam, Bengal and Orissa, which have been very rightly identified as the centres of Śakti workship and sādhanā in different forms since ancient times. Even now Jagannāth Purī, known as Śrī kṣetra, dedicated to the worship of Viṣṇu or, to be more precise, of Dāru Brahma in the form of Jagannāth, carries the traces of Śakti influence in its bosom explicitly, when we find that the Goddess Bimalā is held in the highest esteem and is supposed to be essential for turning the Prasāda offered to Jagannāth into Mahāprasāda. *Nītādrī Mahodaya*, it is to be noted, equated the Deities at Puri with Tantric goddesses as follows: "Tārā sākṣā + Śūlapāṇi Subhadrā Bhubaneśwarī, Nītādrau Jagannāthastu svayaṃ Dakṣiṇa Kālikā". The identity of Uḍḍīyana pītha might have entered into some controversy or the other, but its location at least in the Eastern part of India is most probable. Laxmīnkarā, the sister of king Indrabhuti of Sambalpur, had propounded the Sahaja yāna of Tantra that transcended our ordinary conceptual prejudices in favour of some sort of deha-sādhanā.[10]

Moreover, it is noteworthy that from the very beginning there has been an amalgamation of what are popularly known as the Āryān elements in our civilization. "Conspicuous among the Harappa finds", as has been pointed out by Zaehner, "are figurines of women, usually naked or half-naked, and scholars have seen in these representations of a mother-goddess. Such a goddess is typical of the religion of

Mesopatamia, but is conspicuously absent from the pantheon of the Vedas. In the later literature, however, such a goddess reappears in the form of the terrible goddess Durga or Kali, the consort of Śiva".[11] Zaehner's further observations in this connection are significant. "Much that is typical of classical Hinduism", says Zaehner, "derives not from the invading Aryans, but from the indigenous populations they conquered"[12]. It is of course a matter of dispute whether there has been really some such war between the Āryāns and the non-Āryāns in the remote past and whether the former were the conquerer race *vis-a-vis* the race that was conquered by them, but it is certain that there has been a lot of amalgamation, inter-mixture, and overlappings throughout the ages during which the Śakti cult has come down to us in the present form. As I have pointed out earlier, Varṇa dharma that was so very dear to the Āryāns was rejected by Śāktas who were in favour of a common-istic society with an egalitarian outlook. So the point which I want to make here is that there has been a lot of revolutionary changes in ideas from the Vedic age, from the time of its very inception, and there has been a lot of mixing and remixing too of the ideas as they developed through the ages.

Even much later, as late as sixteenth century CE, popular and interesting poetic writings were freshly coming into being and becoming prevalent in Bengal, well-known as Mangala-Kāvyas, that dedicated themselves specifically to the propagation of the worship of Candī (a form of Goddess Durgā). *Kavikaṅkan Caṇḍī* written by Mukunda Ram is the most famous of these Mangala-Kavyas, which propagates the worship of the Goddess on Tuesdays through the anecdote of a blessed couple, Phullarā and Kālaketu. The significant fact about this blessed couple is that they are shown here as suffering from dire poverty and belonging to the lower strata of the society, that of the fowlers, to whom the Goddess revealed Herself and approached with Her choicest blessings for the propagation of Her worship in the entire society through Her specially chosen devotees.

It is just an ancedote, of course, where imagination has run riot, but it shows how and in what way the goddess worship was spreading and developing even in those days as a popular cult. In our social milieu, as it is usually unexpected that the Divine Grace should be available to a man or a woman of low origin, Kālaketu on his part becomes suspicious in the first instance of the sudden appearance of the Goddess in his poverty-ridden cottage, and takes her to be an ordinary woman. "Himsāmati āmi vyādh ati nīca jāti, More ghare ki kārane āsive Pārvatī", "Being wedded to the cult of violence and belonging, as I do, to the lowliest caste, why should the Goddess Pārvatī come to my residence, at all", asks Kālaketu. As a contrast to our usual apathy, rather both implicit and explict hatred, for the people of low origin, it is interesting to note how the Mahāmāyā, the Goddess Herself, calls Kālaketu, the fowler, with avowed affection and love as "dear Kālu".[13] It is no doubt an imaginative construct of the poet Mukunda Ram, but what is important to note here is that it points to what I would regard as the common-istic revolution inherent in Śakti worship. Here I would like to mention what the editor of *Kavikaṅkan Caṇḍī*, Prof. Bandopadhyaya of Calcutta University, has to say about the specific importance attached to this fowler-anecdote in our tradition. "The renowned Smārta scholar, an expert in the Smṛti tradition, Raghunandan", according to Bandopadhyaya, "has prescribed hearing of the fowler-anecdote (Vyādhopā-khyāna śravaṇa) as an indispensible part of the entire paraphernalia associated with Caṇḍī worship"[14]. Such is the special significance attached to this anecdote in our tradition, which unambiguously points to some sort of tribal influence on the Śakti cult as it has developed in our tradition. The cult of Marigate worship in Orissa also points, in many respects, to some such influence, as is evident during the Jhāmu Yātrā, an important festival of Saharas (Śavaras) functionally associated with Bānki charehikā.

Śakti cult and Tantricism, therefore, point to a development in certain new directions in so far as it explicitly encourages commonistic philosophy and gets involved with the concerns of ordinary men and women with an egalitarian spirit while at the same time we must acknowledge that the supremacy of female power with its tribal base is not entirely new to us either. Take the case, for example, of Umā-Haimavatī as the unique teacher of Brahma-jnāna in the *Kena Upaniṣad* who taught the gods about the invincibility and the authority of Brahman about which they were completely ignorant. Here is a case of frank acknowledgement of the female power as the transmitter of Divine wisdom that was not available even to the gods. The attitude of the Upaniṣads as a whole to the female power becomes evident here through the parable of Indra and Uma Haimavati in the *Kena Upaniṣad* which runs as follows.

There was a fight between the gods and demons, we are told, in which ultimately gods were victorious. Gods thought that their success was entirely due to their own prowess and consequently they became proud of their achievement without realising that their power was only a manifestation of the ultimate power of Brahman. Brahman, in order to teach them a lesson, appeared before them, but gods did not know who He was. Then the gods sent the God of fire as an emissary to Brahman and the fire-god in his turn approached Brahman with pride and self-conceit. Brahman asked him who he was, and the god of fire proudly introduced himself as jāta vedas who could burn the whole world if he wanted. Brahman then threw a small blade of grass before the fire-god and asked him to burn that small piece of grass if he could.

The fire-god however could not burn that small blade of grass, even when he tried with all his might. He returned to the gods in disappointment. Then the gods sent the wind-god as their messenger who also had to admit defeat before Brahman and returned to the gods in shame without being able to know the nature of Brahman. Then the gods sent Indra to ascertain the nature of that Great Being. As Indra was the highest god (Parameśvara), he had the maximum self-conceit and pride because of which Brahman disappeared from his sight altogether, so that he could not get a chance even to have a dialogue which was made available to the other gods. Instead, there appeared a damsel in the sky, Umā Haimavatī. By this time, Indra's self-conceit and pride had already subsided. Umā Haimavatī, when approached by Indra, explained to him that the spirit in question was Brahman and that all those gods had actually become victorious because of Brahman's power and glory. It is through Umā Haimavatī that Indra came to know about Brahman. Indra could realise, then, that the gods had gained victory over demons, not because of their personal prowess, but because of the power of Brahman, and that the gods' power was only a manifestation of the power of the Absolute Brahman. Ācārya Śaṅkara in his *Kena Upaniṣad Bhāṣya* points out that the demons were defeated by Īśvara, while the other gods were mere instruments.[15] What is important here to note is that this was revealed to Indra by a female power, Umā Haimavatī. Brahman is the source of all powers. This lesson was also imparted for the first time to Indra by Umā Haimavatī and Indra is praised as the foremost of the gods in the same Upaniṣad because he was the first to get this knowledge of Brahman.[16]

From the above parable, it becomes evident that Brahma vidyā or knowledge of Brahman comes to the gods through the power of a woman deity, viz Umā Haimavatī. This shows a definite preference of the *Kenopaniṣad* for woman-power (śakti), as far as Brahma-j̃nāna is concerned.

Radhakrishnan points out that "this legend that Umā, the daughter of the Himalayas revealed the mystic idealism of the upaniṣads to the gods, is an imaginative expression of the truth that the thought of the Upaniṣads was developed by the forest dwellers in the mountain vastnesses of the Himalayas".[17] To me it appears that this legend also points to the fact that the truth of the Upaniṣads, *Brahma-vidyā*, was imparted by a woman dwelling in the forest, who was called Umā Haimavatī, the daughter of Himavat. Wisdom, it shows, is not the sole prerogative of male folk, but was available with a lady who was a forest-dweller and it was she who taught the lesson of *Brahm-vidyā* to male gods who, in spite of their obvious brilliance, could not grasp Brahman because of their arrogance. Radhakrishnan has appropriately cited from *Devī Saptaśatī* in *Markaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, in this context, to show that "Durga, sometimes worshipped as Kātyāyanī, is represented to be divine wisdom, brahma-vidyā".[18] The reference to Umā Haimavatī as the propagator of Brahma j̃nāna to the gods is thus significant in pointing to the pre-eminence not only of the forest-dwellers of the Himalyas but also of a lady forest-dweller endowed with Brahma j̃nāna who taught the same to the otherwise powerful male folk ignorant of this subtle truth because of their arrogance.

Within this background study, as has been done so far, albeit inadequately, of the Śakti cult and Tantricism, we can now proceed to a study of the *Saptaśatī caṇḍi*, with an enquiring spirit, where, as far as my understanding goes, a typical philosophy of commonism has been propounded by the sage Medhā in the beginning of this unique text.

CAṆḌI AND COMMONISM

The *Saptaśatī Caṇḍī* or the *Devī-Māhātmya* belongs to the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* which is one of the early six Purāṇas, viz- Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa, Viṣṇu, Matsya, Mārkaṇḍeya and Bhāgavata, out of the eighteen works belonging to this class. Even if it may be a fact that *Saptaśatī Caṇḍī* was inserted into the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* at a comparatively later date, still it could not have been later than A.D 600.[19] So it is in any case an early work, certainly much earlier than later Purāṇas like Skanda, Brahma, Agni or Garuḍa etc, which is of unique significance in the development of the Śakti cult and Tantricism in our culture.

An interesting ancedote attracts our attention at the very outset in this work of seminal importance. The author is out to propound what I regard as the unique philosophy of common-ism through this ancedote, which is so very basic and fundamental to the development of the Śākta cult and Tantricism. The far-reaching consequences of this philosophical thought and its application may need to undergo the test of time. But in and by itself it is certainly worthy of attention at least for suggesting a revolutionary change in the conceptual field, particularly the concept of j̃nana or knowledge in a broad sense. To my mind, a proper application of this revolutionary idea in individual and social life would go a long way in solving at least some of the social problems that confront us.

The ancedote runs as follows. King Suratha, driven out of his kingdom, and the affluent merchant Samādhi, rejected by his wife and children, happen to meet each other near the hermitage of the seer Medha Ṛsi. Then begins a dialogue between them. Both of them admit that, even after being thrown away from their own kingdom and family, they have not been able to forget their past. They are still in a state of anxiety, brooding over the possible difficulties confronting their family members and servants. These thoughts constantly haunt their minds, even as they are reminded of their anxiety and astonishment by each other. They later reveal the same to Medhā with the hope of finding a solution. They labour under the impression that they are wise, and yet their wonder knows no bounds in realizing that, though wise, they are so very infatuated. Their attachment towards their apathetic relatives and the painful past has brough them untold suffering, but they continue as they are. They start enquiring from Medhā how this could be possible at all and how all this was happening. By way of reply, Medhā invokes Śaktitattva (the theory of Śakti, the Primal Energy) in order to bring home that one falls prey to infatuation because of the influence of Mahāmāyā (The Great Power of Delusion). There is an explicit reference made by Adi Sankara, it needs to be noted here, to *Mahāmāyā* in his famous *Saundarya Laharī* where the Mahāmāyā is designated as the *Parabrahmamahiṣi*, the consort of the Ultimate Reality, the Parabrahman, and is identified with goddesses such as the goddess of speech, Saraśwatī, Pārvati, the consort of Lord Śiva, and Mahālaxmī, the consort of Lord Viṣṇu, and even with the Turīya of the Upaniṣad fame. M.M. Gopinath Kaviraj, referring to the dualistic Āgamas points out that "the divine Essence or Śiva is conceived", here as "inalienably associated with a power or śakti which is purely divine and identical with it". "Mahāmāyā is called parā sakti and considered as the Ultimate cause (Parama Kāraṇa) of the world".[20] Here I am not concerned with the metaphysical implications of the concept of Mahāmāyā, but with the common-istic view of knowledge or wisdom propounded by Medhā, just before the introduction of this concept.

According to Medhā, knowledge in a broad sense is found in each and every creature. Man is certainly knowledgeable but knowledge is not the monopoly of human beings alone. In the eyes of Medhā, all living beings, even animals and birds, are knowledgeable. Medhā cites instances from the animal world where creatures, like human beings, are infatuated on account of excessive attachment. Even a bird, though itself seized by hunger, collects foodgrains for its young and feeds them out of great attachment; so also human beings with all their wisdom get themselves entangled with their progeny with the hope of getting a return for their deeds. Thus, according to Medhā, living creatures in general, whether man, beast or bird, are found to be in the whirlpool of infatuation in spite of knowledge and wisdom. Some points of resemblance with the celebrated Adhyāsa-Bhāṣya of Śaṅkara are quite evident here.[21]

It is to be noted that, according to Medhā, the seer, each living being possesses knowledge in varying degrees. He refuses to accept man's monopoly over knowledge.[22] To my mind, this is a unique piece of philosophical illumination drawing its inspiration from *Saptaśatī Caṇḍī*, which has far-reaching consequences.

Adherance to this view does not allow an iron curtain to be drawn between the knowledgeable and the ignorant without reservation. It may be admitted that a person possesses knowledge about a lot of things, and yet he alone is not to be considered wise or knowledgeable on all issues. On the other hand, a person possessing lesser information might be having such wisdom as is inaccessible to the so-called knowledgeable person.

Under such circumstance, it can be inferred how revolutionary it would be to hold that each one in human society is in possession of some knowledge (jñāna) instead of drawing a line of demarcation between the so-called wise and unwise. What to speak of human beings, birds and beasts also are not to be regarded as being devoid of knowledge. Viewed from this perspective, we have to reassess the usual distinctions such as ignorant-wise, great-small, respectable-despicable, etc.

Will all our usual differences evaporate from our conceptual framework altogether, in that case, through this piece of illumination obtained from the *Saptaśatī*? That would be ridiculous certainly. There is however no such implication involved here. What is implied is that discriminations and differences between wise, ignorant, great, small etc. are valid, no doubt, in their respective spheres in our ordinary parlance, but that would be simply a functional difference without any rigidity or absolutistic bias. It is beyond doubt that, in the empirical world for the satisfaction of certain practical needs, people will gather around persons having proficiency and specialized skills, and in return they will show their special affection and reverence to such persons. Others will be undermined of course in that particular respect. Importance attached to some as against others would be simply functional, however, for the concept of importance, in any case, cannot be regarded as having a fixed significance once for all determined by some one's mental fad and prejudice. Once the unique philosophy propounded by the seer Medhā is given its *due* consideration in our social milieu, it is not impossible to have fundamental and revolutionary changes in our thought-process as well as in the evaluation of persons and social institutions. It might be that, as an outcome of such revolutionary thought, we may be impelled to search for fresh values in the so-called insignificant things, and, in my estimation, this very thought would provide the foundation for what I would call a common-istic philosophy. Here, we come face to face with a conceptual remapping having far-reaching implications, which is inbuilt in the very structure of the Śākta-Tantric movement that attaches *due* importance to one and all, to even the outcaste, down-trodden and the rejected stuff of society, as per necessity, during kulācāra/Śakti-worship, thus paving the way for transcending our mental complexes and prejudices borne out of fear, anxiety, attachment, hatred and the like. A unique achievement indeed.

Yakṣa in *Meghadūta* expresses his inner feelings before the cloud-messenger as follows, 'Riktạḥ sarvo bhavati hi laghuḥ pūrṇatā gauravāya', implying that whatever is empty is of little value, while fullness alone can make it honourable and worthy. This also is our own usual feeling in day to day life. It is a naked truth that nobody would attach any importance to some one who is empty or something that is really void of any desired content. People are attracted towards something only when it is full in some respect or the other. This is applicable *mutatis mutandis* in case of possessions like learning, wealth, knowledge, power etc. But, in the conceptual framework of the seer Medhā, it is to be noted that even animals and birds are not empty in respect of knowledge (j̃nana). Consequently, due appreciation of this unique philosophy of Medhā would lead us to respect the so-called useless persons and empty objects, may be, for some of their latent capacity, with a view to unfolding the same in multiple directions for the good of mankind. Nothing on this view is absolutely useless or despicable. Significance is attached here to things and persons in accordance with our specific needs. Instead of having a photographic, static, view based on an essentialist metaphysics, we have here a non-essentialist, dynamic view of human values, in the framework of this unique philosophy of commonism propounded by the seer Medhā. The dynamic implications of this typical philosophy are manifest in the following well-known Tantric text, though these are not obvious to the biased few who either misuse or misunderstand Tantra, sometimes even deliberately, "Pravṛtte Bhairavīcakre sarve varṇā dvijātayaḥ etc".

NOTES

1. *Dictionary of Asian Philosophies* by St. Elmo Nauman, Jr. (Philosophical Library, New York, 1978), p. 328.
2. Kamlakar Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition* (Varanasi, 1981) p. 65.
3. *Ibid*, p. 66.

4. *Cf. Kulārnava Tantra,* 2/119, "Śakti Saṁbhoga mātreṇa yadi mokṣo bhavete vai, sarvepi jantavo loke muktāh syuḥ strī niṣevanāt". The same text points out that it is most difficult to be a genuine practitioner of Tantra, as here we are liable to fall very easily from prescribed standards, more difficult than walking on the edge of a sword, embracing a tiger, or wearing serpents around one's neck.
5. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy,* Vol-II (New York and London, 1961), p. 734.
6. Cf. T.N. Ganapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas* (ICPR, New Delhi, 1993) Chapter-7, "The Twilight language of the Tamil Siddhas", p. 177. Swami Sivananda, it needs to be noted in this connection, has rightly pointed out that "Kundalini yoga actually belongs to Tantrik Sadhana, which gives a detailed description about this serpent power and Mother Divine, the active aspect of the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, resides in the body of men and aims at awakening Her, and making Her to unite with the Lord, Sadasiva, in the Sahasrara". Swami Sivananda, *Kundalini Yoga* (The Divine Life Society, Sivananda Nagar, 1971) p. XXIX.
7. Ganapathy, *Op. cit.*
8. Cf. Pranabananda Tripathy, *An Introduction to Tantra* (A short Practical course), (A Gopabandhu Sahitya Mandir Publication, Cuttack-1, 1974), p. 11. The transcendence supposed to be achieved as the end-product by the Tantra Sādhak (the practioner of Tantra) through some of his practices of which one example is given here by Shri Tripathy (an actual Tantra sādhak of a high order) is somewhat elaborately described in treatises like Praj̃nopāya Viniścaya siddhi of Anaṅga Vajra (CE. 705) as the ideal state for the aspirant, as follows: "Na śūnya bhāvanāṃ kuryāt nāpi cāśūnyabhāvanām, Na śūnyaṃ santyajed yogī na cāśunyaṃ parityajet Aśūnya śūnyayorgāhe jāyatēnantakalpanā Nirvikāro nirāsango niṣkānkso gatakalmaṣaḥ Ādyantakalpanāmuk to yomavad bhāvayat budhaḥ" (4, 5-8).
9. Radhakrishnan, *Op. cit.*

   Cf. also H.N. Chakrabarty, "Tantric Spirituality", K.R. Sundararajan and Bithika Mukherji (eds), *Hindu Spirituality* (New York, 1997) p. 209, "The rudimentary notion of śakti can be traced even to the *Ṛgveda.* For example, *vāk* (speech)which has been given a highly spiritual interpretation in the *āgama* and Tantra, is considered to be the 'mother of the Vedas'. She is most frequently identified with Bhāratī or Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech".
10. Cf. Laxmīṅkara, *Advaya Siddhi,* Na kasta kalpanāṃ kuryāt nopavāso na ca kriyāṃ, snānaṃ śaucaṃ na caivātra grāmadharmavivar janaṃ. Na cāpi vandayad devān kāṣṭha- pāṣāṇa mṛṇmayām, pūjāmasyaiva kāyasya kuryānnityaṃ samāhitaḥ.

11. Cf. R.C. Zaehner, *Hinduism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1966), p. 16.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Cf. Mukunda Ram, *Kavikaṇkan Caṇḍī*, "Kālu Kālu Valiyā dāken Mahāmāyā, Śrī Kavikaṇkan gān more kara dayā".
14. Cf. Prof. Srikumar Bandopadhyaya (ed.) *Kavikaṇkan Caṇḍī* (reprinted by Calcutta University, 1974), "Vikhyāt smārta Raghunandan caṇḍī pūjār ekṭā aparihārya aṅga rūpe nirdiṣṭa haiyāchhe".
15. Cf. Śaṅkara, *Kena Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*, III. IV. 1., "Īśvareṇaiva jita asurāḥ; yūyaṃ tatra nimittamātraṃ".
16. Cf. *Kena Upaniṣad.*, III. IV. 1 "Sā Brahmeti Hovāca Brahmaṇo vā etadvijaye mahīyadhvamiti tato haiva Vidāṃcakāra Brahmeti", also Cf. III. IV. 2, "Tasmādvā ete devā atītarāmivānyandevān yadagnirvāyurindra ste hyenanned iṣ ṭha paśpṛśuste hyenat prathamo vidāṃcakāra brahmeti".
17. Cf. S. Radhakrishnan, *Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 589.
18. Cf. "Mokṣārthivirmunibhirasta samasta doṣaiḥ, Vidyāsi sā Bhagavati paramā hi devi". Radhakrishnan in *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 590, translates this verse of *Saptaśati Caṇḍī* as follows : "O Goddess, Thou art wisdom, the supreme goddess worshipped by the seekers of liberation, by the sages, in whom all passions have subsided".
19. Cf. R.C. Hazra, "The Puranas", *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol-III (The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, 1937, Second Edition, 1962, reprinted 1982), p. 256.
20. Cf. M.M. Gopinath Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Thought* (The University of Burdwan, 1984), p. 207, p. 209.
21. Cf. Sankara, *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya*, "Paśvādiviścāviśeṣāt".
22. Cf. *Saptaśati caṇḍī* "J̄nānino manujā satyaṃ kiṁtu te nahi kevalaṃ, yato hi J̄nāninaḥ sarve paśupakṣī mṛgādyaḥ".

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Gopal Chandra Khan

A Dialogue Concerning Two Systems of Religion

Once upon a time there was a snub-nosed philosopher whose name was Socrates, and who could not live longer than seventy years of his life as his countrymen could no longer suffer him. He invited them to dialogues over many important subjects of which they claimed they knew too much and what they knew was beyond any shred of doubt. But as they joined Socrates in debates and discussions they were soon overwhelmed and their ignorance stood exposed. Socrates exasperated them and pulled them to pieces for holding many uncritical and false beliefs, and they, in turn, managed to bring him to 'justice'. A majority of five hundred and one Athenian judges found him guilty of apostasy and insubordination and condemned him to death. History recorded the death of the first philosopher martyr in the person of Socrates in 399 B.C. However, the philosophical spirit of free thinking and criticism could not be entirely subdued. His disciple, Plato, passed his days without any trouble. But Plato's disciple Aristotle, was again accused of sacrilege by the anti-Macedonian party at Athens, and he fled Eubea lest Athens might witness the execution of another philosopher.

In the twelfth century Ibn Rushid, the last great philosopher of Islam from Cordova, dared Al-Ghazali, the famous theologian of Islam, to a philosophical debate. Ghazali composed his famous tract, *Tahafut-al-Falasifa*, meaning incoherence of philosophy, in which he accused the philosophers of inconsistencies and thereby, in their beliefs and practices. In the introduction to this book Ghazali says that a group of people hearing the famous names of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and knowing what they had attained in such sciences as geometry, logic and physics, have left the religion of their fathers to follow the philosophers. The divine light, says Ghazali, is the basis of most of our knowledge and, he adds, one cannot find proofs for the premises of knowledge; the premises are there and one looks for the reasons, but they cannot be found. Certitude is reached, he says, not through scholastic reasoning, not through philosophy but through divine illumination. One hundred years after the publication of this tract of Ghazali, Ibn Rushid wrote his book *Tahafut-al-Tahafut*, meaning incoherence of the incoherence. In this book Rushid met Ghazali point for point. Rushid argued that knowledge may be acquired from any source but the claim to knowledge must be critically examined before it can be accepted as true knowledge. Philosophers exercise themselves in this criticism, and for this they cannot be branded heretics. Real heretics are they who turn blind eyes to *lumen naturale*, a God's gift to man for his guide, and which is burning in every heart. One who does not listen to the voice of reason does not listen, rather refuses to listen, to the voice of God. Rushid's books were burnt, and his life was in danger. But somehow he escaped the noose of his hangmen by fleeing to Egypt.

In the early seventeenth century, Galileo, who is universally acknowledged as one of the founders of modern science, wrote his books in the best tradition of philosophical dialogues, *Dialogues concerning the two Chief World Systems*, and *Dialogue Concerning Two New Sciences*, which contain his study of the rival Copernican and Platonic systems. The *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* (1632) contained a Preface and Conclusion, which indicated that rival systems are mathematical hypotheses to save appearances. But the rest of the book contained the suggestion that the Copernican alternation is a true description of the world. Unfortunately, however, the Platonic hypothesis was the official doctrine approved by the Church, and Galileo had the temerity to even insist on the Jesuit and the Dominican worthies to find a proper way to interpret the scriptures so as to effect agreement with Copernican astronomy. But the Church had already condemned the Copernican hypothesis as "pernicious to Catholic truth" and placed it on the index in 1616. Galileo was called before the Inquisition and forced to recant the Copernican hypothesis in 1633, and remained under the surveillance of the Inquisition until his death in 1641.

Towards the end of his life the German philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote one book, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793) and a pamphlet, *Perpetual Peace* (1795). The book on religion was not found to be in accordance with the official Christian dogma, and the philosopher was forced to disown the work and withhold its publications. The pamphlet on *Perpetual Peace* invoked Hitler's wrath, and people were asked not to buy or read Kant's books and instead buy and read the Nazi Bible, *Mein Kampf.*

India being the ancient land of philosophy also did not lag behind for too long. One of its ablest philosophers, Prince Muhammad Dara Shikuh, underwent a mock trial at the hands of Aurangzeb's 'Ulama' and was found guilty of apostasy from Islam. He was condemned to death by the 'Ulama' and the younger brother passed the order for his execution, which was carriedout on the night of Wednesday, 21st Dhul Hijja, 1069 AH (A.D. 1659). His principal crime was that apart from translating fifty Upanisads and the Bhagavad Gita into Persian he also wrote an original treatise, *Majma-ul-Bahrain* or the *Confluence of two Oceans,* in which he initiated a dialogue between the two civilizations, the ancient Indian civilization of the Hindus and the relatively younger one, that of Islam. It was a book on comparative religion in which he sought to bring home the message that the difference between the religion of the Hindus and that of Islam is only exoteric and not esoteric, and that they can come closer and closer to each other through a deep study of the cultural contents of both sides.

Dara's mission remained unfulfilled. During his life-time and much after, he was misunderstood and maligned by a biased section of the community. Sufi saints who expressed similar views as of Dara also suffered. Mansur was crucified. Shihabuddin Suhranardi was executed, and Sarmad was put to death. But time has vindicated their honour. Today, they are hailed as martyrs in the Path, and such is also the case with Dara. What we wish to say is that goodwill and understanding, rather than hatred and suspicion will serve our cause. Let the mistakes committed by our predecessors be not perpetuated. The social reality as in India today necessitates a speedy reconciliation of the two civilizations, if indeed there is such a ground, and as Dara clearly perceived that there is. Thus on the occasion of this seminar on interfaith dialogue I take the opportunity to present before you some of Dara's beliefs and studies.

In the *Shathiyat* or *Hasanat-ul-Arifin* (1062 AH), we find Dara quoting the aphorisms of a Hindu divine. Baba Lal Bairagi, which purports to declare that 'Truth is not the monopoly of any one religion'. In the *Majma-ul-Bahrain* he expressed his views even more clearly that in the higher planes of the realization of Truth there is no essential difference between Hinduism and Islam, and therefore, they are reconcilable with each other. In this he endeavoured to show that the conception of the Elements, God, the Senses, the Almighty, the Soul, the Communion with the Indefinite, the Day of Resurrection, the Universe, the Planets and the Cycles, etc. is practically the same in Hinduism and Islam.

Dara was a Muslim throughout. He believed in the Holy Kuran and was of the opinion that the Vedas are "revealed books" and were in accordance with the Kuran or rather they were an interpretation of that. There have been many revealed books, which according to the Muslim faith have been abrogated, but, nevertheless they can be studied profitably by one who wishes to make a higher and deeper study of religious and theological problems. Mirza Mazhar (A.D. 1717) later expressed the same view: "...........It appears from the ancient books of the Indians that the Divine Mercy, in the beginning of the creation of the human species, sent a Book, named the Bed (Veda), which is in four parts, in order to regulate the duties of this as well as the next world...... All the schools (of the Hindus) unanimously believe in the unity of the most high God; consider the world to be created; believe in the destruction of the world, in the reward for good and bad conduct; on the resurrection and accountability (of conduct)....the rules and regulations of their faith are fully and well arranged, so it is evident that it had been a good religion but abrogated. In Islamic *Shar* no mention of any other abrogated religions, save Judaism and Christianity, is made; whereas many other religions have undergone the process of obliteration and affirmation (i.e. change)."

It ought to be noted that according to the holy verse (of the Quran) : 'And there is not a people but a warrior has from among them' and also 'And every nation had an apostle', and other verses, there were prophets also in the countries of Hinduism, on whom be peace, and their account is contained in the books of the Hindus" (Extracts from the life and teachings of Mirza Mazhar, translated by the late Mawlawi Wali, J.A.S.B. vol. xix, pp. 238-39).

As I have said earlier, in spite of the charge of apostasy brought against him, Dara was whole-heartedly a Muslim, and died a Muslim in the Path. He kept his heart and soul fixed in the Kuran which declares that there is no Lord but Him. But the Kuran did not forbid him to study the scriptures of other religions, and he found that the *Vedas* which came earlier and which were claimed to be revealed texts declare the oneness of God. The *Upanishads* are philosophical formulations of the secrets of the *Vedas* whose sum and substance is the Vedanta. The basic principles of the Vedanta do not conflict but concord with the teachings of the Holy Kuran. Thus the practitioners of the Vedanta need not be regarded as heretics, for they also serve the Lord.

Dara took great pains in translating some fifty chapters of the *Upanisads* and entitled them *Sirr-i-Akbar*, or the *Great Secret* in so far as these helped him understand the meanings of many obscure passages of the Holy Kuran. In the introductory pages of his book Dara writes :

"Praise be to the Self which has made the dot on the letter *bi* of *Bismillah* (in the name of God), an eternal Secret in all the revealed Books; and in the Holy Kuran, is a reference to His Great Name (*Ism-i-A'zam*), in which are included all the angels, Heavenly Books, Prophets and Apostles. Preface : Now, thus sayeth, this griefless fakir, Muhammad Dara *Shikteh*, that when he visited the Paradise like Kashmir, in 1050, he had, through Divine grace and His boundless mercy, occasion to become a disciple of Mulla Shah............ As he had an ardent desire for seeing the God knowing devotees of various 'orders' and hear their high utterances regarding monotheism, he had read the various works on monotheism and had himself composed tracts, but, in spite of this, his thirst for understanding *Tawhid*, which is a vast ocean, was increasing more and more. New problems were coming to his mind, the solution of which was impossible without a reference to the sayings of God or without (quoting) the authority for His Omniscient Self. Moreover, there were many secrets concealed in the Holy Kuran and the Sacred Book, whose interpretation was difficult to find, so he (the author) desired to read all the revealed Books, for the utterances of God elucidate and explain one another. It may be that in one place it is found in compendium, while in others it may be given in detail; and as such, the compendium may be understood by help of the detailed. I read the *Old* and *New Testaments* and the *Psalms* of *David* and other scriptures but the discourse on *Tawhid* found in them was brief and in a summary form and, from the easy translations made by interested persons, the object could not be realised". (*Sirr-i-Akbar*, A.Z.B Curzon Collection, No. 11, 154. Also J.A.S.B. Vol XIX No. 7, pp. 242-44, 250-52).

Further, the author says, "he examined the religious works of the Hindus who do not negate monotheism", and found that the monotheistic verses contained in the four *Vedas* have been collected and elucidated in the *Upaniṣads*, which is the ocean of monotheism. So he undertook a literal and correct translation of the work with the help of the Pandits and Sanyasis of Benaras and accomplished the work in 1067 A.H. He says: "Any difficult problem or sublime idea that came to his mind and was not solved in spite of his best efforts, becomes clear and solved with the help of this ancient work, which is undoubtedly the first heavenly Book and the fountainhead of the Ocean of monotheism, and in accordance with or without an elucidation of the *Kuran*". Dara observes that the Holy Kuran contains a reference to the hidden book (*Kitab-i-maknun*), but neither the Psalms, the Pentateuch and the Gospels can be said to be that hidden book. Now, as the *Upaniṣad* is a hidden secret and the monotheistic verses of the Kuran can be found in it, it is certain that the hidden book is a reference to this very ancient book. Dara acknowledges that he has known unknown things and understood problems through the medium of this book, the *Upaniṣad*. And he further says that in translating this book he has no other objective in view except that he will be personally benefited or that his family members, friends and the seekers of the truth will gather its fruits.

Dara completed his last great original work, *Majma-ul-Bahrain* or *The Mingling of the Two Oceans* in 1065 A.H. (1654-55 A.D.), when he was forty-two years of age. This tract is of supreme importance to a student of comparative religion as it embodies the first and perhaps the last attempt of its kind to reconcile the two apparently divergent religions. According to some authorities it was this very work that brought about Dara's death. It is said that this tract was laid before the ecclesiasts who declared its author a heretic and sentenced him to death, which was only too faithfully carried out by his over zealous brother.

The tract named Majma-ul-Bahrain begins with an Introduction and contains twenty sections having the following headings : (1) The

Elements (2) The Senses (3) The Religious Exercises (4) The Attributes (5) The Wind (6) The Four Worlds (7) The Fire (8) The Light (9) The Beholding of God (10) The Names of God, the Most High (11) The Apostleship and the Prophetship (12) The Brahmanda (13) The Directions (14) The Skies (15) The Earths (16) The Division of the Earth (17) The Barzakh (18) The Great Resurrection (19) The Mukta and (20) The Night and the Day.

In the Introduction to this work Dara writes : "In the name of One who hath no name, with whatever name thou callest Him, He Uplifteth His head.....He is manifest in all; and everything has emanated from Him. He is the first and the last and nothing exists, except Him.... And unlimited benedictions be upon the complete manifestations, the cause of the creation of the universe – Muhammad, may peace be on him and his exalted descendents and great companions. Now, thus sayeth this un-afflicted, un-sorrowing fakir, Muhammad Dara Shikuh, that after knowing the truth or truths and ascertaining the secrets and subtleties of the true religion of the Sufis and having been endowed with great gift (i.e. Sufistic inspiration), he thirsted to know the tenets of the religion of the Indian monotheists; and having had repeated intercourse and (continuous) discussion with the doctors of perfect divines of this (i.e. Indian) religion who had obtained the highest pitch of perfection in religious exercises, comprehension (of God), intelligence and (religious) insight, he did not find any difference, except verbal, in the way in which they sought and comprehended Truth. Consequently, having collected the views of the two parties and having brought together the points – a knowledge of which is absolutely essential and useful for the seekers of Truth – he (the author) has compiled a tract and entitled it *Majma-ul-Bahrain* or *The Mingling of the Two Oceans*, as it is a collection of the truth and wisdom of two truth knowing (Hax Shinas) groups.... It is certain that discerning intelligent persons will derive much pleasure from this tract (Risala), while persons of blunt intelligence, of either side, will get no share of the benefits" (*Majma-ul-Bahrain*, tr. M. Mahafuz-ul-Haq, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, 1929, pp. 37-38). Fearing possibly a backlash from both the communities, Dara further says that he has put down these researches according to his own intuition and tasks for the benefits of the members of his family, and he has no concern for the common folk of either community.

As we have already said, in the *Majma*, Dara brings together twenty-two discourses on twenty-two subjects of philosophical discussion. In each discourse he draws reference to the *Upanisads* and the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy, like the *Purva Mimamsa* and the *Uttar Mimamsa*, on the one hand, and the Holy Kuran and the perceptions of the Sufi saints on the other, and then draws the conclusion that the basic ideas of these two religious cultures are the same. For your satisfaction I may here be permitted to give an abstract of one, two or three of the discourses from the *Majma*.

(1) DISCOURSE ON THE ELEMENTS (ANASIR)

> Know that the elements are five in number and that these five alone form the constituents of all the mundane creations– First, "The great element" (*Unsur-i-A'zam*), which the men of Faith (*Shar*) call '*Arsh-i-Akbar*, or, the "great throne"; Secondly, the wind; Thirdly, the fire; Fourthly, the Water; and Fifthly, the dust. In the Indian language these are called *pancha bhūta*, namely, *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *teja*, *jala*, and *prithivi*. Now, there are three *ākāśa*, namely, *bhūtākāśa*, *manākāśa* and *cidākāśa*. Of these, *bhūtākāśa* is surrounding the elements, *manākāśa* is encircling the whole existence and *cidākāśa* is encircling all and is covering everything. This *cidākāśa* is permanent, that is, not transitory, and there is no Kuranic or Vedic Verse testifying to its annihilation. The first thing to come out of *cidākāśa* was love (or *Ishk*), which is called *Māyā* in the language of the Indian monotheist, and "I was a hidden treasure, then I desired to be known; so, I brought the creation into existence" – this is a proof of the above statement. From '*Ishk* (love), jivatman, the great soul was born, by which is understood a reference to the soul of Muhammad and (further) to the "complete soul" of the Chief (of the Faithful) – may peace be on him and salutation. And the Indian monotheists name him *Hiranyagarbha* and *Avasthātman*, which denotes the greatness. After that comes the element (*unṣur*) of wind, which is said to be the breath of the Merciful (Rahman) from which springs air mundane. At the time of

breathing it came out hot, on account of its confinement in the August Self, fire came out of air; and, as the same breath possessed the qualities of mercy and unity, it became cold and, as such, water was created from fire. And as, on account of their great purity, the elements of air and fire are hardly perceptible and as water is more perceptible than either, some have held that, water was created first, followed by the element of dust. This dust is likened to the froth of that water and resembles the milk which, when put on fire, boils and froths.

And, as regards this, on the Day of the Great Resurrection, which the Indians call *mahāpralaya*, the dust will be destroyed first, being swallowed by water; water being dried up by fire; fire being extinguished by air and air being merged in *mahākāśa* together with *Ruh-i-Azam* (or, 'the Great Soul').

"Everything is perishable but His face (i.e. He)" (Kuran, Ch. XXVIII: 88). "Everything on it must pass away. And there will endure the face (i.e. the person) of thy Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honour" – (Kuran, Ch. LV: 26). So, the exception of *wajh* (or, His face) found in the above two verses, which purport to deal with the destruction of everything, points (unmistakably) to *mahākāśa*, which does not admit of annihilation. And had it not been so, He would have said : "Everything is to be annihilated except Him"; but the specification of 'face' (in the above verse) cannot but apply to *mahākāśa* which constitutes the fine body of the Holy Self. Now, in the Indian language, earth is called *divi*, from which everything has been created and unto which everything will return; and, as stated in the Holy Verse, "*From it We created you and into it We shall send you back and from it will We raise You a Second time.*" (Kuran, Ch. XX: 55)

(2) DISCOURSE ON THE RESURRECTION (*KIJAMAT*)

The Indian monotheists have held that, after a very long stay in Heaven or Hell, the *mahāpralaya*, or the Great Resurrection, will take place, which (fact) is also ascertainable from the Holy Verse (of the *Kuran*) : "*But when the Great Resurrection* *comes*" (Ch. LXXIX: 34). The following verse also speaks of the same, "*And the trumpet shall be blown. So all those that are in the heavens and all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah pleases*" (Ch. XXXIX : 68).

This (exception) refers to the group of *Arifs* (i.e. knowers of God) who are immune from senselessness in thoughtlessness both in this and the next world. Now after the upsetting of the skies, the destruction of the heavens and the hells and the completion of the age of *Brahmāṇḍa*, the occupants of Heaven and Hell will achieve *mukti*; that is, both will be absorbed and annihilated in the Self of the Lord, as stated in the Holy Verse. "Every one on it must pass away. And there will endure for ever the person of thy Lord, the Lord of glory and honour." (Ch. LV; 26,27)

(3) DISCOURSE ON THE INFINITY OF THE CYCLES (*ADWAR*)

According to the Indian doctors, God, the Most High, is not confined to these days or these nights only but, that, when these nights will terminate, days will reappear and when these days will terminate, nights will reappear – this process continuing without end. This process is named *anādiprabāhe* and Khwaja Hafiz, may mercy be on him, having his eyes on the Infinity of cycles, has said :

"There is no end to my story, or to that of the beloved,
For, whatever hath no beginning can have no end".

Now, whatever peculiarities of the manifestation and concealment of His Self have appeared in previous days and nights will also reappear, in exactly the same manner, in the following days and nights, as stated in the Holy verse: "*As we originated the first creation, (so) We shall reproduce it*" (Ch. VII:29)

So, after the termination of this cycle, the world of Adam, the father of men, will reappear in exactly the same manner; and, as such, it will be endless. And the verse of the *Kuran* : *As He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return*" (Ch. XXI:104), is also an argument, proving the above (statement). If, however, any one doubts and says that the finality of our Prophet, may peace be on him, is not proved by this exposition, I will tell him that next day also, our Prophet, may peace be on him, will reappear in an exactly similar manner and on that day (also) he will be called "the Last of the Prophets". The following Tradition, which is narrated in connection with the night of Ascent (Miraj), is an argument to this effect. It is said that our Prophet, may peace be on him, saw a line of camels, proceeding (in succession) without any break, and on each of which two bags were laden, in each of which there was a world like that of ours and in each such world there was a Muhammad (just) like him. (Our Prophet) asked Gabriel, "What is this?" (Gabriel) replied, "Oh Prophet of God! Since my creation, I have been witnessing this line of camels proceeding with bags (laden on them), but, I am also unaware of their (real) significance". This, so Dara explains, is a reference to the Infinity of Cycles.

These are some of the theological-metaphysical speculations in which, according to Dara's research, the two great religions concord. Of course, they are the minor essences of religion, and yet the gurus and clerics of religion on either side muddle over them and create confusions, and so Dara has to considerably exercise himself to clear away their confusions. But what really constitutes the common ground for uniting the two religious camps is their monotheistic belief and monistic philosophy. If both you and I believe that there is no Lord but Him, that everything is His creation or His manifestation, that the goal of any of His creations is to progress step by step towards Him, to be reabsorbed or to be united with Him, there surely in matters of religion we do not differ from each other, but stand together. What else is needed is Goodwill. Let us embrace each other and let all of us progress happily towards the Lord – *sarve bhavantu Sukhino sarve santu nirāmayāḥ.*

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Md. Sirjul Islam

Sufi Notion of Inter-faith Dialogue and World Peace

INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, interfaith dialogue is the attempt at finding out the commonalities of different religions through rational and unbiased discussions among people of various faiths. It is also a process by which individuals of various faiths may find ways for transcending their narrow boundaries of caste, creed, culture, language and religion. Therefore, it is an effort to analyze, criticize and synthesize the ideals of various faiths as well as the psyche of their followers with an open mind in order to establish world peace. The members of the interfaith dialogue shall have to adopt a conceptual framework about religious justice, liberty, equality, fraternity and unity for world peace. These are the basic ideals of different faiths as well as the means for peace in the world. Some people have the misconception that interfaith dialogue will disturb their individual religious identities. But it is not true. There is no doubt that each and every religion has two sides, external and internal. The former is related to the external religious rituals, festivals etc., whereas the internal side is the quintessence of religion. The external aspect of religion may be varied like the different flowers of the garden, but the internal aspect is more or less common to each and every religion. Interfaith dialogue provides an initiative wherein the members of all faiths will be guided by reason and the spirit of tolerance, so that religious fanaticism, narrow-mindness, religious dogmatism may disappear from society and the world, and thereby peace may prevail in the world.

Therefore, **interfaith dialogue** refers to cooperative and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions (i.e., "faiths") and spiritual beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels with the aim of deriving a common ground in the belief through concentration on similarities between faiths, understanding of values, and commitment to the world.

In this paper, I am interested in finding out a clue for world peace through Sufi interfaith dialogue. Sufism is an egalitarian spiritual movement of Islam which works for the unification and assimilation of humanity. Today, Islam is a misunderstood religion. Many non-Muslims regard Islam as a religion that promotes violence, terrorism and war. Unfortunately, they rely in their view of Islam on the general media, which is not always accurate in reporting the news. Before blindly accepting what the TV, radio or newspaper are reporting, one should think critically about what is being reported, and at the same time, the study of Islam is essential to remove the misconception. Islam is in fact a religion that promotes peace and understanding among people of all faiths, and it strongly prohibits all forms of violence and aggression against all people regardless of their faith or race. It recognizes the oneness of humanity. This is specially advocated by Sufism.

HISTORY OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

The history of interfaith dialogue is as ancient as religions, since men and women when not at war with their neighbours have always made an effort to understand them (not because understanding is a strategy for defence, but also because as long as there is dialogue wars are delayed). History records many examples of interfaith initiatives and dialogues throughout the ages. An interreligious organization or interfaith organization is an association which encourages dialogue and cooperation between the different faiths of the world. In 1893, the Parliament of World Religions held, in conjunction with the World Columbian Exposition, a conference in Chicago that is believed to be the first interfaith gathering of significance.[1]

In India interfaith dialogue and action has taken place for many centuries. The Emperor Akbar the Great, for example, encouraged tolerance in Mughal India. In his court he discussed with the people of various faith backgrounds, including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Christianity etc. This great Mughal emperor, Akbar, was a keen follower of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, a great Sufi exponent of India and made annual pilgrimages to his tomb in Ajmer, India. He married a Hindu princess, gave her due respect and her son inherited the throne. He was fond of organizing Sufi dances and musical concerts in his assembly. His empire extended from Kabul to parts of Burma. As Amartya Sen points out in his book *The Argumentative Indian*, Akbar, although a devout Muslim, evolved a composite multi-culture and encouraged rational enquiry and interfaith dialogue to promote understanding and social harmony. Akbar founded a new all faith forum called "Din Ilahi" where scholars and spiritual leaders from all faiths were invited to dialogue and learn from each other's point of view. In his autobiography "*Akbarnamah*" he affirmed: "The various religious communities are treasures entrusted to us by God. We must love them as such. It must be our firm faith that He blesses every religion. The Eternal King showers his favors on all men without distinction". Muslim Spain is an additional historical example of great religious pluralism. Another example of historical coexistence between people of different faiths has been in the Balkans under the administration of the Ottoman Turks from 15th to 19th centuries. Catholic and Orthodox Christians as well as Muslims, Jews and Sufis have dwelled in harmony for hundreds of years in this region (despite some small incidents). Today the region is shaky and very sensitive. Especially following the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, ethnic and religious wars have been waged; massacres and other horrors have been recorded in the last decade of the 1990s.[2]

Early twentieth century interfaith dialogue started between the different faiths and in the New Millennium, especially after September 11, 2001 people of the world have felt the necessity of fresh Interfaith Dialogue. After September 11, under the leadership of the interfaith trailblazer, the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, Dean Emeritus of St. John The Divine, the Interfaith Center of New York's mission became increasingly focussed on combining practical information about establishing civic connections and information about other religions with insight about common social concerns. On October 13, 2007 Muslims expanded their message. In 'A Common Word between Us and You', 138 Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals unanimously came together for the first time since the days of the Prophets to declare the common ground between Christianity and Islam. In July 2008, a historic interfaith dialogue conference was initiated by King

Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to solve world problems through concord instead of conflict. The conference was attended by religious leaders of different faiths like Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism etc.[3]

NECESSITY OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

In the days of turmoil we feel the necessity of interfaith dialogue in more effective ways so that we can eliminate the barbaric incidents happening in relation to religion. One thing which is very pertinent to us is that if we truly follow our respective religions there cannot be any conflict in the world. Our differences are in fact more cultural and ritualistic. Ignorance causes prejudice that directs the people in conflict and violence. Two religions never clash if they move strictly in their own way. It is our selfish interest and narrow mindedness which motivate us for clashes. Interfaith Dialogue is not only desirable but necessary as it will help to clear up misconceptions about other faiths. There are various types of dialogues like: a) first, dialogues that involve interaction between different members of various religious groups, b) the second type of dialogue, dialogue for action, c) the third type of dialogue, dialogue for religious experience. For example, there have been instances where Buddhist monks from Japan would stay at Christian monasteries in Europe to learn more about Christianity or Muslim Sufis may go to Hindu hospices to exchange their religious ideals, and d) the last type of dialogue, one basically for theological experience, "which include scholarly discussions on various issues" such as drawing similarities between the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Gurugranth Sahib*, the *Tripitaka*, the Kuran and the Bible etc.

We know that India is a multi-religious country where interfaith dialogue is much more essential to remove misconceptions about religions. Generally, in this age of globalization some sort of cultural interaction is going on throughout the world where social intercourse is also associated deeply. However, religious understanding is slackening day by day, and that is not a good sign for the world.

As we mentioned earlier, interfaith dialogue has emerged as a prominent civil society initiative between nations and groups in the post-Cold War world, amidst the "Clash of Civilizations" debate and the raging ethnic and religious conflicts in various parts of the globe.

"The Alliance of Civilizations" initiative under the auspices of the United Nations connects people and organizations devoted to promoting dialogue among political, religious, media and civil society leaders, particularly between Muslim and Western societies. Other such dialogue frameworks include the Cordoba Initiative on improving Muslim-West relations, the Madrid Dialogue Conference that was a Saudi-Spanish effort, the Assisi interfaith work of the late Pope John Paul II and the Common Word initiative of Muslim scholars. Despite the significant progress achieved, the record shows that interfaith dialogue has remained confined to a select few and has not percolated to the public at large.

Religion, in a generic sense, covers both the articles of faith or creed and a set of rituals emanating from them. The two are connected but not synonymous. Furthermore, all systems of faith also promulgate certain universal values and principles of human conduct that are similar to each other. On a metaphysical plain thinking about the Creator, the Purpose of Creation, and the relationship between the Creator and the Created often tends to run along parallel lines and reaches proximate conclusions. Once that level is reached, commonalities prevail:

Hum muwahhid hain hamara kaish hai tark-e-rusoom
Millatain jab mil ga-een ajzaa-e-eeman ho ga-een

Dialogues and discussions between adherents of different faiths have always taken place and are not a modern day novelty. Occasionally, they have been state-induced; more often, they have emanated from individual or group initiatives.

This backdrop helps us address a set of questions. To what extent did this contact help the process of mutual understanding, particularly an understanding of each others' religions and systems of belief? What were the points of convergence and divergence? To what extent were these influenced by politics and state craft? What conclusions can be drawn from it? Above all, what needs to be done today?

The first, and unquestionably the most important in the Indian context, is the contact between Islam and Hinduism. This was not a single point happening in space and time and response patterns were not uniform. In southern India Islam as a faith came through traders and had little difficulty in being accommodated. The story was different elsewhere in the sub-continent where Islam was often identified with rulers; here too, however, response patterns varied and their homogenization do no service either to history or to proper understanding. But the spread of Islam under the banner of Sufism is very significant. It is a truism that all social orders are impacted upon by belief systems as well as by loving relationships. An early example of Muslim perception of Hinduism is to be found in the Central Asian scholar Abu Rehan Alberuni's account written in the early years of the eleventh century. He candidly admitted the similarities between the adherents of the two faiths: "The Hindus believe with regard to God that He is one, eternal, without beginning and end, acting by free will, almighty, all-wise, living, giving life, ruling, preserving: one who in his sovereignty is unique, beyond all likeness and unlikeness, and that he does not resemble anything nor does anything resemble him." In a similar vein notable Sufi Amir Khusro in the fourteenth century said the Hindus are among those good people who believe in God who is omnipotent and omniscient and is "pure Truth and inimitable Reality."[4]

Another example of this approach was notable Sufi Dara Shukoh's *Majma-ul Bahrain* wherein he concluded, with regard to Indian monotheism, that "he did not find any difference, except verbal, in the way they sought and comprehended Truth." (*Juz ikhtUaaf-e-lafzi dar daryaqft o shenaakht-e-Haq, tqfaawati na deed*). So far as I know that he is the first Sufi scholar who practically started interfaith dialogue in India and translated the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, *Vedanta* and the *Yoga Vasistha.*

In the twentieth century, Allama Muhammad Iqbal went even further in a popular poem, *Hindustani bachon ka gaumi geet*:

Wahdal ki lai suni thi dunya ne jis makaan se
Mir-e-Arab ko aai thandi hawa jahaan se
Mera watan wahi hai, mera walari wahi hai

These should have signaled a mutual appreciation of two systems of belief. The Mughal Emperor Akbar and his Prime Minister Abul-Fasl came close to such an appreciation because he had a deep regard for the Sufi teachings and solidarity. The chasm was sought to be bridged by the **Sufis** who took religion in simple way from the classes to the masses; hence, it is **"a walking incarnation of interfaith dialogue"**. This achieved a degree of success, and put its imprint on the **Bhakti movement** which left some mark on perceptions but did not alter the wider picture. Over time, the negative perceptions congealed. It is evident, therefore, that despite adequate knowledge and good intentions, misperceptions prevail. Their impact on Indian society needs no commentary. Hence, **interfaith dialogue should proceed on this Indian heritage that we have inherited.** This heritage has no specific religious, linguistic or cultural label, and no attempt should be made to keep it exclusive or make it exclusionary. The inclusiveness of our constitutional ideals derives its inspiration from this heritage and any process that further strengthens it is good for the nation and needs to be encouraged.

SUFISM

Sufism is a spiritual movement. Sufis believe that human being is the combination of body (*jism*), mind (*nafs*) and spirit (*ruh*). Therefore the psychological traits and states of mind of the Sufi anchorite have the pivotal role during his spiritual practices. To control the mind power a Sufi devotee is sincerely engaged in some subtleties (*lataif*) which is acquainted in the Sufi terminology as "*latifa-e-khamsa* (five subtleties), a psycho-physical enterprise, by which the Sufi development of mind and mental peace can be measured. This psycho-physical enterprise thus bears an extricable relation with the spirituality that ultimately elevated him to attain the inner vision of knowledge (*didah-i-batin-i-marifat*). These *lataif* are — *qalb*(heart), *ruh*(spirit), *sirr*(secret), *khafi*(hidden) and *akhfa* (most hidden) states. All these *lataif* function in their specific way and preponderate over or regulate the mind and body of the spiritual devotee. Each of these *latifa* is attributed in a particular colour, like *qalb* as yellow, *ruh* as red, *sirr* as white, *khafi* as black and *akhfa* as green. These *lataif* bear a relation with the soul(*nafs*) that possess some specific spiritual gradation and after systematic spiritual training an anchorite can achieve the vision of the pure essence(*mushahada*), where each of the *latifa* is associated with a particular irradiation (*tajalli*) that ultimately elevate him in the perfect psycho-physical tranquility. It is also called the state of pure unity(*ahadiyat-e- mujarrad*) and perfect peace of mind (*itminan*). Thus, Man, according to Sufi spirituality, is a microcosm (*alam as-sahgir*) that is composed of ten constituent parts whose origin lies in the macrocosm (*alam-i-kabir*) which designates both the world of creation (*alam-e- khalq*) and the world of order (*alam-e-amr*). A Sufi devotee is deeply connected with these psychological states that turn him into a perfect human being (*al insane al kamil*). The world is overcrowded but there is an enormous crisis of good human beings still today.[5]

Sufism is a spiritual path of Islam, which leads to divine love by practising loving kindness towards all. Hence, Sufism is the essence, the seed of all religions. Sufism relates of this truth: *As long as people do not love one another and do not accept each other as they are, they do not love God in a true sense.* This I think is the true message of interfaith dialogue.

Since Sufism is a liberal, tolerant and inclusive form of Islam it has interwoven in its tapestry the fabrics of local and folk cultures and elements of spiritualities in many parts of the world. Through its poetry, music, dance, unique aesthetic sensibility, advocacy of peace, love and mysticism, the Sufi tradition seeks and celebrates direct love and communion with God and people of the world as well which mirrors a deep connection with one's own humanity. In India, Khwajah Moinuddin Chishti was a follower of the Chishti Sufi order which worked relentlessly to remove religious fanaticism and dogmatism. Approximately, the Sufis arrived in India around twelvth century A.D. though it was originated formally in Persian land in the eighth century A.D. They were truly pious devotees, whose coarse woolen clothes (*Pashmina push*) showed their humility. The term *Sufi* comes from the Arabic word *Suf* meaning coarse wool. Generally Sufis wore coarse woolen raiment as the sign of humility of mind as well as for the sweetness of faith. Above all, the Sufis sought the divine reality or ultimate truth that stands above all the illusions and deceptions . of the material world. In order to achieve ecstatic union with God, they incorporated techniques of *Dhikr* (remembrance of God) through the process of unsurpassed love and the whirling dancing called *Sama* in Sufi terminology, where the circle of pious people are assembled. Believers joined in tight-knit brotherhoods or *tariqahs* (paths), each following a charismatic leader (*shaykh*) of their own *silsilah* (order). They elevated Islam in an easy way and popular form that helped them much to gain popularity among the masses. Sufis offer great hope for pluralism and democracy within Muslim nations. Progressive Sufi thinkers are quite open to modern knowledge and science. People organize processions, they seek healing miracles, and women are welcome among the crowds. While proudly Islamic, Sufi believers have always been in dialogue with other great religions.

Spiritual thought of human consciousness has become a unifying force in the explanation of behaviours that indicate psycho-physical aspects of man. During the past few decades, most of the speculative hypotheses of human perceptual sensitivity, state of consciousness, self-awareness and mind-brain interaction achieved through millennia of meditative and spiritual disciplines have become a challenge to the neuro-scientists. As a result of meditative treatment programmes taken up by the Sufis, psycho-physical disorders of human beings have been cured. For their spiritual exercise and mental peace they did not hesitate to adopt the reasonable practices from other faiths. Historically, it is almost proved that the Sufis' *Muraqabah, Dhikr, Fanafillah, Chillah-e-Makus* highly resemble Buddhist *Dhyana, Nam smaranam, Nirvana* and the Yogis' *Urdhamukhi yoga*, respectively.[6]

Sufism is an Islamic spirituality, where the finite soul always aspire to attain a power in the mind and body of the devotee through unsurpassed love (*'ishq*), and systematic spiritual exercises. The Sufi's rigorous spiritual exercises, vista of knowledge (*marifa*) help him to arouse new potentialities in the mind which synthesize the psycho-physical planes of the spiritual anchorite. Hence, in Sufism, religious principles are deeply entangled with the psychological traits of the devotee which helped him a lot to share spiritual felicity and pleasure with others, because for establishing interfaith dialogue and world peace mind-body serenity and equilibrium are essential.

Sufism, as an egalitarian branch of Islam, is highly conscious concerning cultural homogeneity and rapprochement in avoiding all fundamentalisms. The Sufis are disinterested in ritualism. In this regard, a Bengali Sufi utters-

Mor mon chailache mandire masjide
Tor dak shune sain shunte na pai
ruikha danrai gurute murshide

Tor duyare nanan tala Quran, Puran, Tasbimala
Bhek pathi to pradhan jvala
Kainda madan mare khede

(Oh my god) my mind goes to temple and mosque
there I do not hear your call, rather I stop there
with the formalities of guru and Murshid.
At your door (Oh God) there are many locks and keys
like the Quran, the Puran, the counting of beads etc.
all these are the external paraphernalia only
I cry observing these formalities.[7]

The Sufis' basic commitments and values are the same as in Islam – peace, love, truth, justice, equality and brotherhood, which are considered as the most essential principles of cultural exchange. Sufism emerged in Islamic society as a movement to revitalize Islamic religious values. These principles of Sufism help man for inner upliftment and urge him for cultural coalescence. In Sufism, one will have to prove one's credibility by practising these principles. If one fails to practise these, he/she cannot be considered a true Muslim.

The main intention of the Sufi anchorite is to attain Divine wisdom(*marifah*) that elevates him to acquire Truth (*Haq*) which is not confined particularly to any group but is open to all. Sufis claim that these are highly metaphysical in nature and value embedded. Like Socrates, they propagate the view that knowledge of self is the best knowledge. Therefore, they say, *man arafa nafsahu faqad arfa rabbahu* i.e. if you know thyself, then you can apprehend your Lord.[8] In the course of time, Sufism extended its wings and mixed up with other faiths, philosophy and literatures that ultimately changed the shape of Sufism, and Islam, too. The Sufis accepted interfaith dialogue, particularly to unite the entire humanity. In the western region, many people accepted Sufism. Even Christianity, the Zoroastrianism, and the Buddhist faiths adopted Sufism and inhabited the various towns of Persia, Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia. At that period, these regions were the main centres of Neo-Platonism. The influence of Greek and Christian thoughts and philosophies are discernible in the culture and values of the reputed Sufis. It is worth mentioning that Greek wisdom flowed towards the Muslim East through Harran and Syria. The Syrians took special initiative to accept Greek speculations, i.e. Neo-Platonism and transmitted to the Muslim society. Both Plato and Aristotle are popular in the Muslim community even today. The Arab chronicles recognized the superiority of thought in Indian medicine, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy. But Sufis are interested not only in these thoughts; they are similarly interested in getting knowlege in metaphysical subjects also. Ba Yazid al Bistami, a celebrated Sufi learnt metaphysics and spirituality from his teacher Abu Ali Sindi who was of Indian origin, and ancestrally a Buddhist. The pantheistic concept of Sufism (*Hama ust / wahdat ul wujud*) is originally a Vedantic concept and the Sufi concept of *Fana* highly resembles Buddhist Nirvana.[9] This is specially a very significant sign of interfaith understanding.

There are many values that are intimately embedded in Sufi thought and culture as the essential components of interfaith dialogue.

Sufi Concept of Love

It is generally considered that Sufism is mainly based on the philosophy of love, and love has no boundary of caste, creed and religion. Sufis have mainly utilized it as the main source of their realization of Truth/ Reality (*haq*). They have considered their relation with God just like the relation of the lover and the beloved. In their eyes, a Sufi is a lover (*'ashiq*) and God is the beloved (*ma'shuq*). A Sufi wants to unite himself with God to express his concept of love as a metaphysical element that cannot be articulated in language. The feeling of love is purely mystical. It is a matter of apprehension and realization only. The idea of love is presumably borrowed by the Sufis from the holy Quran, wherein the terms *mahabbah, hubb, wudd, muwaddah* depict the various types and gradations of love. The *hubb* and *mahabbah* are inter-related, and represent a super category of love or overflowing love (*ashaddo huballillah*). Prophet Muhammad also clearly defined the concept of love several times. In a Hadith he says, "My servant draws nigh unto Me by works of devotion,. And I love him, I am the ear by which he hears, and the eye by which he sees and the tongue by which he speaks (Bukhari).[10] The greatest Sufi and thinker of Islam al Ghazali in his *Ihya ulum uddin* maintains that love is a natural desire, which produces pleasure but when that desire assumes an intense form, it is called passionful love or *Ishq*. Sufis say whenever love goes beyond extremes in affection and becomes intense it is called *Ishq*. Sufis regard Love as the essence of their metaphysics. A true Sufi is a lover of God as well as the lover of the whole universe. Whenever a Sufi is deeply fused in the love of God he sees all as his own without any discrimination of caste and creed, even in the highest ecstatic moment whenever a Sufi is fully intoxicated, he sees nothing except God and all the distinction between mine and thine disappeares. In this stage he proclaims *anal haq* (I am the Reality), as Mansur al Hallaj uttered. Here a Sufi proclaims: *ishq ashiq hai ishq hai mashuq khud ke upar khudfida hai ishq*"[11] i.e. Love is the lover and love is the beloved and love is fondly in love with itself. Again the reputed Sufi al Jarrii says: *"Ishq awwal, ishq akhir, ishq zahir was batun, ishq hi se tu banaeh har dar wa diwar hai ishq*[12] i.e love is the beginning, love is the end. Love is the manifest and love is hidden. Love is that sustains the world. Sufis are very much concerned with God, soul, concept of love, tolerance, brotherhood, mystery of the life and the Universe. They regard the ideas of God's grace, goodness, beauty, truth, etc. as the basis of our moral apprehension. The concept of love is beautifully epitomized as "Love is not to be learned from me, it is one of God's gifts and comes of His grace".[13]

Sufi Concept of Equality and Brotherhood

Sufis are lovers of God and all creatures. They love all and sundry without any discrimination of caste, creed and religion. According to their tradition, anybody can take their discipleship without changing their own faith, and all initiated members of the Sufi *silsilah*(order) are regarded as *pir bhai* (brother of spirituality). There is no caste classification, all the rigidities and barriers like high and low, superior and inferior, are broken down in their society. They believe that all human beings are the descendants of Adam. According to them, piety is the best criterion for measuring someone's quality and goodness. Sufis pay regards to all creatures as they think that they are the inevitable part of the environmental balance. Their universal brotherhood is based on the notion of *khidmat-e-khalq* (the service of humanity) as they apprehend it as one of the best principles. So they utter:

> *tariqate bajuz khidmat-e- khalq nist*
> *batasbih ws sajadeh wa dilaq nist*[14]

– the path of Sufi is nothing but the service of humanity.

It is neither in a rosary, nor on the prayer carpet, nor in the garment of the Sufi.

Sufi Concept of Tolerance

Though the main aim of the Sufis is to unite their finite soul with the Infinite, nevertheless, they do not cut themselves off from society. In India, Sufis achieved extra-ordinary popularity due to their humane and tolerent attitude. Their eternal message is:

> *awwal sakhawati chun sekhawat-e-darya*
> *doam sefqati chun sefqat-e-aftab*
> *sewan tawazui chun tewazu-e- zatneen*[15]

i.e. a generosity, like that of the ocean, mildness like that of the sun, and modesty like that of the earth.

In extending a tolerant outlook they open their *khanqah* for all human beings and the guests these who arrived in their *khanqah*, lived, slept and ate together without any ethnic distinction. The holy book and scriptures were open to all and accessible to all. The celebrated Sufi Nizam al din Aulia's humanism and toleration were very lofty. He said: "devotion to God does not mean detachment from the mundane world. Highest form of devotion to god is removal of misery of the distressed and extending helping hands to the helpless and the feeding of the hungry".[16]

In the dark ages of human civilization (*aiyam e jaheliyat*) Islam showed the light of rich culture towards all aspects of human life in transforming all spheres of society. But it is very unfortunate that most of the people do not understand the true spirit of this cultural transformation. In due course, Islamic culture penetrated into India in the garb of Sufism and assimilated with Indian culture and its divergent forms. It assimilated with Indian composite values and developed various aspects of culture. There is an erroneous thinking that Islam is typically rigid and is not able to adapt with the changing patterns of the society. Since Sufis were very much egalitarian in outlook, Islamic culture has adapted with various cultures of the East and the West, and accommodated the attractive and reasonable portions of other cultures in its fold. This philosophical enquiry is an initiative to understand the true nature of Indian cultural homogeneity and rapprochement. In this contemporary world, Sufi culture and its ethical values, if practised properly, will help in annililating most trivial problems of the world.

In Sufism, Islam is considered as a cosmic principle and system pervading the world. This system acts throughout the cosmos in perfect order, wherein human beings participate by pursuing the principle consciously or unconsciously. Sufism aims at psycho-physical equilibrium for helping human beings to lead undisturbed lives and attain higher kind of knowledge (*marifa*) concerning the Reality. It not only is concered with the welfare of human beings, but with the well being of all creatures (*khidmat-e-khalq*).

SUFI NOTION OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Though Sufism is an indispensable part of Islam, it is not for a particular community. Rather, it is for all human beings and in establishing this attitude they embraced all and sundry, and hate none. In their outlook, the sinner and the pious, the believer and the non-believer, the black and the white, *mumin* (pious) and *kaflr* (impious), *badshah* (king) and *faqir* (beggar), lover and beloved, all are equal. When Sufism penetrated into India, the Sufists addressed all human beings from one platform. As a result, the barrier between the higher and lower, superior and inferior disappeared and they opened the doors of love and faith towards all. Hazrat Nizam al din Aulia in extending his eclectical outlook uttered—*"inn Hindu berathar-e- man ast*" i.e. this Hindu is my brother.[17] Amir Khusrau , *tota-e-Hind* (the parrot of India) says: "*aai ke taneh zibut be Hindu harry, ham amuz az wai parastish gari"*, i.e. Oh you ! who sneer of the idolatry of the Hindu, learn also from them how worship is done.[18]

Recognition of human rights and human dignity are the essential components of interfaith dialogue. Sufis are highly conscious of human rights and dignity. They extended their loving friendship to all whether they were Hindus or Muslims, Jains or Buddhist, Christians or Jews. According to them, all human beings are tied up in one relationship like the different flowers of the same garland. Therefore, Sa'adi, the reputed poet of Iran wrote:

Bany adama 'azayi yak digaranad
Keh dar afrinish zik zowharand
Chun azuxvi bedard award rozekar
Digar 'azuha ran a mande karar
Tu kij mehnat digar an bigmy
Nashayad keh namat nehanad admi

i.e. All human beings are like the limbs of the single body because they are born of the same essence.

When a limb of the body is afflicted to pain in the daily life, the other limbs/ organs of the body feel equally hurt.

You who do not realize woe of your fellow beings
Do not deserve to be called human beings.[19]

Sufis believe that no religion is more sublime than the religion of love. Therefore, Rumi says:

millate ashiq az hameh millate zuda ast
'ashiqan ra mazhabe wa millate khuda ast

i.e. the religion of love is different from all religions for the lovers, only God is religion.[20]

Their concept of love naturally led them towards humanism and helped them enormously to disparage fanaticism. In this context, the utterance of Umar Khaayyam is highly significant , as he stated:

butkhaneh wa ka 'abe khane bandegist
Naqus, zidane taraneh bandegist
mehrab kalvisa wa tasbih salib
haqqa keh hameh nishane bandegist.

–temple and mosque both are the places of worship.
Blowing the conch-shell is the melody of worship.
Arch, church, rosary and cross
By God, all are the sign of worship.[21]

Apart from this notion Sufis also propagate moral teachings because they are the staunch supporters of equality of mankind, integrity and social solidarity. They propounded not only the unity of religion but also human unity. For this, they preached that to give pain to a heart is worse than to demolish thousands of mosques:

Dil badast aur keh hajj-e- akbar ast
Az hazaran ka 'abe yak dil behtar ast
Ka 'abeh bandegah e khalil azar ast
Dil guzargah-e- zalil akbar ast.

–Give solace to a heart as it is the greatest pilgrimage.
A heart is better than thousands of Ka'aba
Ka'ba is the edifice of Abraham,
Heart is the abode of almighty God.[22]
Sufis dislike any discrimination between one man and another.

They advised all to become egalitarian human beings and stated:

Yak chirag buthkhaneh wa ka 'be khaneh rawshan karde ast...

–One earthen lamp may enlighten both the temple and mosque(without any discrimination). Oh people! why you cannot do this?[23]

Sufism is one of the important gates through which science and spirituality can enter into the domain of ethics to save the world.

The following utterances of *Diwan-i- Shams* of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi are very relevant for present humanism and global spiritualism.

What is to be done oh Muslims? For I do not recognize myself:
I am neither Christian, nor Jew, nor Magian, nor Muslim
I am not of nature's mint, nor of the circling heaven.
I am not of earth, nor water, nor of air, nor of fire;
I am not of the Emirian, nor of the dust, nor of the existence, nor of entity.
I am not of India, nor of China, nor of Bulgeria, nor of Suqsin
I am not of the kingdom of Iraq, nor of the country of Khurasan;
I am not of the world, nor of the next, nor of the paradise, nor of hell.

I am not of Adam, nor of Eve, nor of Eden and Rizwan,
My place is placeless, my trace is the traceless, (I am Infinite).

He sends an open invitation to all mankind and has said:

Come, come whereever you are
Wonderer, idolater, worshipper of fire
Come though you have broken your vows a thousand times
Come, and come yet again
Our is not a caravan of despair
(It is the caravan of hope and love).

The notion of interfaith unity is also perceptible in another couplet of the notable Sufi of Persia, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi as –

ekhtelaf-e khalq aj nam uftad
chun be ma'anyraft aran uftad
aj mazar gah ast aye magaz ujud
ekhtelaf –e- mummin wa gabar wa yahud

–The difference among creatures comes from the outward form (*nam*).

When we penetrate into the inner meaning (*ma'na*) there is peace.

Oh! Marrow of existence! It is because of the point of view in question.

That there has come into being differences among the Muslim, Zoroastrian and Jew.[24]

It is our utmost duty to generate love, fraternity among other faith so that we and our posterity may live in peace and prosperity.

NOTES

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Manisha Barua

Religion and World Peace

The problem of religion and its relation to peace is the most debated topic of recent times. Before going into details we have to understand these two terms from various perspectives. The term 'religion', as we all know, is derived from the word 'religere' which means to bind together. Religion is, therefore, the binding force of society. So the etymological meaning of the term religion suggests that the task of religion is to bind or unite rather than disintegrate society.

Scholars and philosophers have looked upon religion in different ways. Some have given a very narrow and limited definition of religion while others have presented a much broader outlook. Tylor has defined religion as a 'belief in spiritual beings' which is however a narrower view of religion. According to Kant, religion is "the recognition of all duties as divine commands''. According to Max Muller, "religion is a mental faculty or disposition which enables man to apprehend the infinite". In the book "Religion and Humans" (E. John p.49), religion has been defined as an institution which is indispensable to the fulfillment of its will to live a harmonious and satisfactory life. Thus, religion enables its followers to live a life of harmony and peace.

Like religion, the word 'peace' is also used in a variety of senses. It may either mean absence of war or it may refer to mental peace or *śānti* as used in Indian Philosophy. According to some, it may mean piling up nuclear weapons in order to preserve peace in the world. The ancient Romans had a sort of proverb which said "If you want peace prepare for war". Peace is not a negative concept, but a positive virtue which is not concerned always with things of this world, but which has its origin in something heavenly, for example, in salvation or in God. Peace is also described as a state of tranquility of mind and heart by perception of wisdom or reality.

Now the question is : "How can peace be achieved through religion? Or is it the case that religion is responsible for destroying peace in the world?"

We cannot deny the fact that religion is not always associated with peace and understanding. Though Truth is One, it is achieved by different ways and means which manifest themselves in different religions. Just as human beings are different and their aptitudes and interests are different, so is religion. Hostility amongst the followers of different religions is as old as civilizations. The religious world has been divided into different camps in every age or period of human history. There have been wars and battles in the name of religion; there has been bloodshed, destruction and indiscriminate killing. So there has also been search for peace. There have been peace makers in all ages. But this is only one side of the picture. Religion is known to promote peace and harmony amongst men in society. All the great religions of the world, even the animistic religions of ancient times promote unity and brotherhood. Tolerance and sympathy are the great traits of the Hindu religion. This is evident from the meaning of the term 'Dharma' which has a very broad connotation. By 'Dharma' we mean a way of life or a code of conduct rather than a particular religion. The Upanishad beautifully says "*Gavam aneka varṇanām Kṣirasya asti eka varṇata Kṣira vat paśyate jñānam linginastu gavam yathā*" (cows are of different colours but their milk is of only one colour that is white. Similarly though the proclaimer uses different forms, the Truth proclaimed is one). The famous *Śanti mantra* of the ṚgVeda prays for *śānti* or peace not only for the followers of Hinduism but for the whole of mankind, and in fact, of all living beings. (*Dau śāntiḥ antariksham śāntiḥ Prithvi śāntiḥ etc.*)

Regarding the concept of incarnation in which the Hindus believe, they are very liberal. The Hindus accept many incarnations of God. Right from the sub human world like Fish (*Matsya*) and Tortoise (*Kurma*) to Rama and Kṛsna, the gods of Hinduism. The Hindus accept even Gautama Buddha as an incarnation, and they will have no objection probably to accept Jesus as an incarnation. This speaks of the liberal attitude of the Hindus. Hinduism believes that each new founder of a religion does not preach an absolutely new truth. Thus, Kṛsna said, the truths he taught to Arjuna were taught by Vivasvan to Manu, by Manu to Īkṣāku and then by Rishis through all ages. According to Bhagavan Das, founders of religion have proclaimed the principle of oneness or universality in all religions as demanded by the special times, places and the circumstances in which they lived. The Essential Religion, *vidyā* or wisdom or whatever we may call it, is eternal, universal and unchanging.

The greatest hindrance in the path of attaining peace today is the mad race after material gains. Hinduism through the message of the *Īṣa Upanishad* offers a beautiful solution to this:

Isa vasya midam sarvam
Yatkincha jagatyam jahat
Tena taktyena bhuntijitah
Ma gridah Kasyacit dhanam[1]

"With that renounced, thou mayeth enjoy. Covet not the wealth of anyone at all." This is perhaps the greatest lesson from the Hinduism against the hoarding of wealth which is the greatest problem today. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* is very emphatic on this point when it says "Our mind is like a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants." Again it says that immortality and peace will be impossible by the amassing of huge wealth.

The greatest beauty of Hinduism lies in the fact that it does not adhere to a particular doctrine for attaining peace. Hinduism suggests three different alternatives–*jñāna yoga*, *bhakti yoga* and *karma yoga*–as the means for attaining *mokṣa*. A *jñāna yogi* like Saṅkara realizes the ideal of "*ahaṁ bhahmaṣmi*" (I am Brahman) and thereby becomes one with Brahman. A *bhakti yogi* like the Vaishnavi saint loses himself in utter devotion to God. As the *Bhagavad Gītā* says,

Ksipram bhavati dharmatma
Sasvat santih nigascati
Kaunteya pratijanih
Na me bhaktah pranasyati[2]

The Gītā says "Even if a person be soiled with the sins of a lifetime let him come to Me, rightly resolved, I see no sinner. That man is holy."

The Bhagavad-Gītā has also taught how to attain peace through the path of action. No human being can remain inactive even for a moment.

'*Nā hi kaşcit kşana mapi jātu tisthate akarmakṛt*'[3] (Bhagavad-Gita). Though active by nature, man must learn to act in the right way which is beautifully suggested by Hinduism. "*Karmenye vādhikāraste mā phalesu kadācana*". "Your concern is only with the action not with the fruits". The path of *Nişkāma karma* as suggested by the Gita is the prescription for peace. The Gītā exhorts a man to be a *sṭhitaprajña*. A *stitaprajña* is one who remains unmoved in the worst of circumstances as well as in the greatest happiness.

Sukhe dukhe same kritva
Lābhālabho jayājayo."[4]

"A man must remain unaffected either in happiness or sorrow, gain or loss, victory or defeat." If a person acts in a detached manner then unhappiness and sinfulness cannot touch him just as water does not touch the leaf of a lotus plant.

The philosophy of Saṁkhya recognizes three types of suffering – *adhibhautika, adhidaivika* and *adhyātmika*, and the yoga shows us the way to the attainment of perfect peace. The *astaṅgika mārga* of yoga points out to the path of perfect peace and happiness.

Hinduism points out that *avidyā* is the cause of ignorance that generates unrest and fear. Man visualizes an uncertain future which is one of the basic causes of fears. The inevitable nature of death too is responsible for causing fear and unhappiness. The sense of isolation from his fellow beings is another cause of fear. There is division, doubt, fear and suffering in his mind. He seeks for support outside to seek consolation. Hinduism has taught us to overcome this state of restlessness by yoga and meditation. When we discover the secret of spirit within us our life becomes full of peace and happiness. As the *Taittiriya Upanishad* puts it "Knowing the bliss of Brahman, he does not fear anything."[5] Again the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says "By knowing Him alone one surpasses death."[6] Again the *Īṣa Upanishad* says "What sorrow, what delusion is there for Him who perceives this unity."[7] The soul is then no more isolated and is in perfect equanimity.

In Hinduism like Buddhism, religion is thought to be a set of rules and regulations to overcome the suffering or *dukkḥa* and thus to attain everlasting peace. The goal of religion is to bring about freedom from *dukkḥa*. Freedom or peace can be attained by leading a moral life like following the path of truth, non violence, kindness, charity, justice, etc. which again in their turn lead to mundane peace.

Christianity is a religion which gives immense importance to peace. According to Christianity peace among people, groups or nations, is not possible without goodwill towards others and goodwill and love towards others is not possible without recognizing God as common Father and without living according to one's conscience since the voice of conscience according to Christianity is the voice of God. If we do not listen to this voice we do not listen to the voice of God. The duty of man, according to Christianity, is to honour God and glorify Him. This is exactly what heavenly beings announced on the day Christ was born. If God is not honoured and glorified, good will among men is an impossibility, and consequently, peace on earth becomes an impossibility. Peace on earth is a natural outcome of the ten commandments mentioned in the Bible. Love of God and love of neighbour becomes the central teaching of Christianity. 'Love thy God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.'[8] This is followed by the teaching 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' Loving one's neighbour as oneself is the core of establishing peace on earth. Other Commandments mentioned in the Bible are 'Thou shalt not kill', 'Thou shalt not commit adultery', 'Thou shalt not steal', 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour' and 'Thou shalt not covet' are commandments strong enough to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth as taught by Jesus. Thus in all these commandments lies the whole happiness of man, and happiness leads to peace, for there can be no happiness without peace.

Peace in Christianity is a gift of God, for Jesus Christ said "My peace I give to you." Christ said that real peace comes from God and not from anything that belongs to the world. This is very important in the sense that according to Christianity real peace cannot come from the satisfaction of material wants. As it has been said in the New

Testament, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The peace mentioned in Christianity is the peace of soul, peace of mind and peace of heart which surpasses all earthly pursuits and desires. We may mention here a few lines from the Bible: "What causes wars, and what causes fighting among you? Is it not your passions that are at war with your members? You desire and you do not have, so you kill. And you covet and you cannot obtain, so you fight and wage war. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and you do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions."[9]

It is clear therefore that passion lead to unhappiness and lack of peace. The phrase 'we do not ask' refers to the fact that we do not pray to God and ask Him in the proper way, that is, with sincerity, and we spend it in fulfilling our passions and desires. Again the Bible says:

Ask and it will be given to you,
Seek and you will find
Knock and it will be opened to you.

Perhaps in no other religion has there been so much of talk regarding forgiveness as in Christianity and forgiveness has a great role to play in the establishment of peace. The important teaching of the New Testament is: "conquer hate by not resisting evil."

If he smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.[10]

Again it is said 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.' A Christian has to become perfect as the Father in heaven 'For does not God send rain and sunshine to all and good and evil alike?' This is perhaps the greatest lesson in non discrimination which is the basis of establishing peace.

The greatest example of forgiveness in Christianity is best illustrated in the parable of the Prodigal son. According to the parable, a rich man had two sons. One day the younger son asked for his share of his father's wealth. On receiving it, the younger son wasted his inheritance in evil conduct and at last became very poor and began to starve. Kicked by his friends and tormented by hunger he asked forgiveness from his father. The father received him with great kindness and said: "This son of mine was dead but now he is alive, he was lost, but now he has been found."[11] 'No sin is too great to be forgiven–this ideal of Christianity is the greatest promoter of peace. All through the ages the role of the Pope down to Pope John Paul II has been to promote better peace and understanding between nations.

Coming to Islam, the very word Islam comes from the word 'Aslama' which means entering into peace. So Islam also preaches the ideal of peace. The central theme of Islam is belief in the oneness of God. The Quran also speaks about the unity and brotherhood of man. Prophet Muhammad declared that the truths he taught were also to be found in the writings of the ancient seers. The Sufis declare that just as it is the lustre of one sun that shines in the different sea waves and bubbles, so it is the same Truth under the cover of different forms.

The observance of the five pillars of Islam is the key to establishment of peace. The pillar of Zakat or religious tax paves the way to economic stability to the poorer section thereby establishing peace. One of the greatest impediments in society is economic disparity which is responsible for conflicts and wars. The payment of Zakat or religious tax seems to remove this hurdle to a great extent. The Muslim prayers run thus– "O my Lord, Thou art the helper of the afflicted, the Reliever of all distress, the Consoler of the broken hearted......... Grant that I may do the deeds that win Thy love."

The Sufi version of Islam is out and out a religion of peace. According to the Sufis, love is the sole means of reaching Allah. The Sufi is intoxicated by the love of Allah which gets manifested in the love of human beings. For the Sufi "Love" means the attributes of the lover (Sufi) are changed into those of the beloved. Now he lives in accordance with the sayings of God "When I love him, I will be his eyes by which he sees and the ear by which he hears and his hands by which he reaches out."[12]

The concept of Jihad in Islam has invited much criticism in today's world as there has been constant strife and battles in the name of Jihad or religious war. Jihad actually means striving and struggle in the path of God realization. It is also interpreted as readiness to give up one's life for the sake of Allah and his message. Sometimes Jihad is also interpreted to refer to non-believers of God (Kafirs). However Surah 5:9 permits the Muslims to declare Jihad against the non-believers of Islam. All Muslims who die in this kind of religious war pass into paradise (Surah 2.154). It is this interpretation of Jihad that has created many problems. It is therefore the sacred duty of the people to direct Jihad in such a way that it serves the real cause of Islam which is establishment of peace on earth.

Buddhism is a religion of peace par excellence. According to the Buddha, religion should be regarded as a noble way of life. The motto of Buddhism is:

To avoid evil
To do good and
To purify the mind,
This is the teachings of all the Buddhas.

Albert Einstein, speaking about the religion of the future, says, "It should transcend a personal God and avoid dogmas and theology. Covering both the natural and spiritual it should be based on a religious sense arising from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual as a meaningful unity. Buddhism answers this description." The approach of tolerance and broad mindedness taken by Buddha stands unique in the history of world religions. He had advised his followers not to accept the dharma merely out of reverence but only after investigation. Only if they were fully convinced with his method, would He accept them as His followers. Even after becoming His followers, He did not prevent them from supporting their previous religious teachers. This clearly indicates the extent of freedom He gave to His followers without harbouring any jealousy or ill feelings towards others. In the long history of Buddhism, there has not been any violence in the name of religion; there was no bloodshed in the course of its propagation. The Buddhists are peaceful and spiritual minded. Unlike the materialists of today Buddhism places character, service, love and peace above fame, wealth and war and Buddhism, wherever it exists today, has flourished.

Both the Hinayana and Mahāyāna forms of Buddhism centre round the concept of peace. The only difference is that the followers of Hinayana are concerned with peace for one's individual self or *arhatship* while Mahayana Buddhism is concerned with *Bodhisattva* or salvation of all sentient beings on earth. According to Buddha conflict in mankind assumes three forms:

1. Man versus nature
2. Man versus man
3. Man versus himself

In Buddhism the last one that is 'man versus himself' assumes priority in the sense that if the first predicament is settled the others will automatically follow. Buddhist ethics is therefore psychological in nature. The first requisite for peace is therefore to master and perfect the moral behaviour of mankind. If I want others to be good and kind I must set an example by being good and kind myself. The mind must be trained for intuiting the truth and conquering the passions because knowledge and will are two sides of the same coin.

Buddhism believes in impermanence and change. The delusion that things will endure forever causes pain and suffering because things that are so dear to us pass away in spite of our best efforts to hold them back. Right knowledge and knowledge of impermanence save us thus from despair and suffering, leading ultimately to peace.

If suffering is due to false vision the immediate task is therefore to remove it by right understanding. Right understanding translates itself practically in compassion and tolerance – the greatest ideal of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The immediate goal however is to remove suffering. So compassion takes priority before contemplation. Thus prajñā (wisdom) and Mahākaruṇā (compassion) are the two solid pillars of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Prajñā is complete wisdom about the total emptiness of existence; Mahākaruṇa is the widest sympathy which brings all creatures under the loving umbrella. Thus, according to the Mahāyāna, Buddhahood is not individual but universal. According to the Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Buddha does not remain blind to the world when he attains *nirvāna* but offers light to all to reach the goal. According to the Buddha, "I would be a guard to them that have no protection, a guide unto the traveller, a ship, a well spring, a bridge, for the seekers of the shore, I would be a lamp to such as need a lamp, a bed for the weary that need a bed, the very slave of such as need service."[13] (*Bodhicāryavatāra*)

Thus, Buddhism has given us a noble lesson of transforming our selves before transforming others (*sva cittāni varayisvāmi*). To think of changing the world before correcting oneself is like carpeting the whole world to avoid thorns. The immediate duty is to wear shoes to avoid the thorns. A self cultured person alone will be able to wipe the tears of the poor and the helpless. Such a person is only fit to put an end to suffering and generate world peace.

The Jaina theory of *Syādvāda* and *Anekāntavāda* preaches relativism establishing world peace. The philosophy of *Syādvāda* and *Anekāntavāda* of Jainism tries to harmonize all conflicting interests and contradictory doctrines and sees unity in diversity. Jainism proclaims that there is truth in every existence however slight. In this age of greed, battles, persecution, invasions, etc. the philosophy of non absolutism teaches us to be tolerant and broad minded. Jainism believes that individual reform is the golden path to social reform. If we are individually peaceful within, external peace is bound to follow. Thus Jainism by its strong ethical code paves the way for world peace.

Like Krishna, Christ, and Buddha, Mahavira who is the last of the twenty four tirthankaras left no stone unturned to show us the path leading to peace, harmony and happiness. Lord Mahavira has emphatically declared in the *Acāraṅga sūtra* that one weapon is stronger and superior to the other, but the path of ahimsa or peace is unsurpassed. Real peace can be established by creating goodwill in individual and other fellow beings. When we begin to believe that all lives are sacred including animal life, our attitude becomes one of 'live and let live' because to injure or harm others is to harm our selves. Jaina Āgamas say that fire cannot be put out by fire; we need water for that as bloodstained clothes cannot be washed by blood but with water. To establish world peace, according to the Jainas we have to have Samyak darsan in the powers of Ahiṁsā. The *triratṇa* of Jainism *Samyak jñāna, Samyak darshan* and *Samyak caritrāni* leads to real peace—*Samyak jnana, samyak darsana, samyak caritrani moksa marga*

The religion of Taoism which was founded by Lao Tzu is especially a religion of calmness and peace. The word Tao refers to the 'way', 'the Great Way' or the 'Way of the Heavens' and the principle of Tao work unconsciously for the good of the world. To attain peace the man of religion is asked to submit with all humility to the Tao.

Taoism accepts certain moral principles to establish peace in society. It emphasizes certain negatives precepts: 1) Do not kill, 2) Do not drink alcohol, 3) Do not tell lies, 4) Do not commit adultery, 5) Do not steal. The followers are also advised to follow certain positive virtues like filial piety, loyalty to emperors and teachers, kindness to all creatures, patience, self sacrifice, liberating slaves, teaching the ignorant and promoting their welfare and so on. Taoism exhorts its followers to get rid of passions and desires because it believes that passions and desires are at the root of all evils. The mystic union with the Tao and meek submission to the Tao produces peace in the heart. Taoism encourages quietism, patience, tolerance and humility. These virtues constitute the foundation of promoting peace on earth. Since there is no God in Taoism and Confucianism the question of religious rivalry does not rise at all.

Confucianism is another religion without God. It is essentially a religion of books. Confucianism always encourages its followers to tread the Middle Path. The fundamentals of this Middle Path consist in knowledge, sincerity of purpose, harmony in social and family relationships and world peace. Confucianism like Taoism is concerned with the problems of day to day living. The ethico religious principles of Confucianism like Mutuality comprise the relationship between one man and the other which is very important for peace on earth as most of the quarrels arise due to improper relationships. As Confucius says in the Analects which is an important work on Confucianism: "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you."[14] One should do that what is beneficial not only to him but to his fellowmen. The principle of Propriety which involves what is called 'Li' promotes proper understanding of the feelings of others and a deep sense of humility. To act according to "Li" is to act with kindness and social grace to minimize unpleasantness and maximize harmony and peace. Confucius believes in the art of good living which is to be cultivated by each and every man living in society. Confucius speaks of five important relationships: a) Father to son, b) Husband to wife, c) Sovereign to subject, d) Elder brother to younger brother, e) Friend to friend. If these relations are maintained in the proper way there is less chance of conflict; and peace will follow.

To conclude, we may say that though religion is responsible for many wars and battles the positive side of religion far outweighs its drawbacks. It must be noted that true peace is the matter of the heart, and it lies within oneself. Heaven and happiness, misery and hell are all within us. Our own mind makes and unmakes war and peace, our love and hatred, joys and agonies are all within us. It is still not too late to achieve peace and happiness in the strife-torn world of today through religion, for every cloud has a silver lining. As Buddhism rightly says:

"One may conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men yet he is the best of conquerors who conquers himself."[15]

NOTES

1. Īṣa Upanishad, chapter 1, verse 1.
2. Bhagavad-Gītā, chapter 9, Sloka 31
3. Bhagavad-Gītā , chapter 3, Verse 5 (Sloka)
4. Bhagavad-Gītā, chapter 2, verse 38
5. Taittīriya Upanishad chapter II, 8
6. Śvetāśvatara Upanishad chapter VI 15
7. Īṣa Upanishad 7
8. Deut 6, 4-5
9. James 4, 1-3
10. Mathew 5, 39
11. Luke 15, 24
12. Readings from the Mystics of Islam by M. Smith p. 171-72
13. Bodhicaryavatara – Quoted from Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I, p 590.
14. Analects 15, 23.
15. Dhammapada 103.

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Binod Sarma

Śakti Worship in Ancient Assam with Reference to Vedic Sage Vaśiṣṭha

Śakti (cosmic) energy has been identified as early as at the time of the Vedas and was recognised as the all pervading goddess–'the upholder of the universe'. Dr. Radhakrishnan, while discussing the 'Theology' of the hymns of the Ṛg Veda states thus,–"The later *Śakti* systems utilise the goddesses of the Ṛg Veda. The Vedic Aryan prayed to the *Śakti* or energy of God as he meditated on the adorable divine light that burnt up all dross : "Come thou, O goddess, that granteth our prayers. Thou art the unperishing, the equal of *Brahman*".[1]

This goddess or *Śakti* has been associated with the benevolent God *Śiva* as his consort."*Śiva* is the pure indeterminate *Brahman*, while *Śakti*, the power of *Māyā*, makes him determinate endowed with the attributes of knowledge, will and action."[2] *Śiva* and *Śakti* are inseparable and with that concept in view, *Śakti* has been worshipped by various names and forms.

The easternmost region of '*Bhāratavarṣa*', which has been referred as *Prāgjyotiṣupura* or *Kāmrūpa* by the Ramayana, Mahabharata, the Sanskrit *Kāvyas*, the *Purāṇas*, *Tantras* etc., later came to be known as Assam. Earlier it comprised a large tract of present day North Bengal and North Bihar. Besides, it has direct contact with China, Bhutan, Tibeto-Nepal, Burma etc. as its bordering areas. The great river, *Brahmaputra*[3] (Lauhitya), coming from the north-east corner and flowing through the heart of this land went past the western boundary. It was a home of various tribes besides the Aryans, Dravidians etc. and they contributed largely towards its history, civilization and religion. A renowned historian has said, - "It is the region where the Hindu and Mongolian cultures met and blended. It is the home of *Śakti* worship and fanaticism,"[4] Dr. B.K. Barua explicity says about the antiquity of Saktism in ancient Assam thus: "The Tantric literature such as *Kālikā Purāṇa, Kāmākhyā Tantra, Kālibilās* etc. narrate how the *Śakti* cult, centring Assam became prominent in north-east India. According to the German scholar Winternitz this cult entered into Tibet from Assam. Matriarchal system is predominant amongst the tribes of Assam. So a host of Sakta Gods and Goddesses originated in Assam. The forms of many Gods and Goddesses referred to in the *Kālikā Purāṇa* are not found in other places of India."[5]

Dr. B.K. Kakati has said that the worship of *Śiva* was prevalent in Assam prior to the pre-historic era and the practice has come down all through either primarily or in a secondary manner. He is of the view that, though the worship of *Śiva* was widely prevalent here from the remote past, the tradition of *Devī* worship was not that old in ancient Assam. In support of his view he states that from the river *Karatowā* in the western boundary of *Kāmrūpa* to the *Viśwanāth Khetra** of the east, the number of *Śiva Khetra* are fifteen, whereas that of *Devī's* are five. Further, he wants to say that the *Mārkanḍeya Purāṇa*, upholding the episode about the prominence of *Devī* for the first time, refers to *Kāmrūpa* only as a place famous for sun worship.[6] He again says that king Naraka "introduced the *Śakti* cult and found in the local goddess *Kāmākhyā*, a manifestation of divine energy."[7] All these points will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The *Kālikā Purānā*[8] says that Naraka was installed as the king of Prāgjyotiṣpura by his father, *Viṣnu*, who also advised him to worship none but the goddess *Kāmākhyā* alone who was existing there in his kingdom.[9] Naraka's time has been assessed as around 200 A.D. In terms of the pauranic tradition, he became the king of Prāgjyotiṣpura during the Tretā era. He was a young person, sixteen years old and yet most powerful, handsome, learned, having presence of mind and of modest disposition. Now, even admitting the fact that though Naraka strictly adhered to the worship of goddess *Kāmākhyā*, it cannot however be surmised that this Royal Goddess emerged as the sole idol for adoration of the masses. Evidently, the worship of *Śiva* occupied a dominant place throughout the length and breadth of *Kāmrūpa*. Two instances may be cited here in support of this view.

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*Located at Modern Tezpur town under Sonitpur District, Assam.

First, the *Kālikā Purāṇa* says that the land of *Prāgjyotiṣpura* within the territory of *Kāmrūpa* where the goddess Kāmākhyā was the presiding deity formerly was kept hidden by *Mahādeva* for himself.[10] Secondly, *Viṣnu*, with the permission of *Śambhu* resettled his (*Śambhu*) followers, the *Kirātas*,[11] to the east of *Kāmrūpa* beyond the rivers *Lolitā* and *Kāntā* and also made a clear demarcation of Naraka's kingdom from theirs.[12] This also shows the mutual existence of the worship of *Śiva* and the goddess *Kāmākhyā* rather than the presence of a 'contest' for supremacy or a 'hitch' between the two cults of *Śiva* and *Śakti* as some critics vaguely want to assert.

Moreover, after becoming the king of *Prāgjyotiṣpura*, Naraka admitted that, though he was not follower of *Śiva*, the worship of *Śiva* exists in his kingdom as a secret practice. This prompted some critics to say that Saivism was 'banned' in the kingdom of Naraka, which, however is not true, for had this been banned, a powerful king of Naraka's stature would not have allowed this practice, even secretly. It simply points out that as the king himself was not a saivite but a follower of goddess *Kāmākhyā*, the followers of *Śiva* considered it was necessary to practise their cult secretly for fear of losing its integrity. It, otherwise, upholds the picture of a co-existence of these two cults in the past.

As the worship of *Śiva* was widely prevalent, there necessarily appeared more *Śiva Khetras* than the *Devī Khetras*. This does not, however, mean that Saivism prevailed over Saktism in ancient Assam. This can be viewed in this way, that the worship of goddess *Kāmākhyā* with her eight attendant goddesses was no doubt confined within the precincts of *Prāgjyotiṣpura* ruled by King Naraka, whereas, there developed various other goddesses emanated from the goddess *Rudrānī* or the goddess *Umā*. The *Kālikā Purāṇa* says, – "The devotee may also worship goddess *Rudrānī* separately from the company of *Mahādeva*, the goddess who is of fair complexion like gold, who holds the lotus and *Chāmar* by her two hands and who always sits in the posture of *padmāsana* on a lotus that rest on a tiger skin."[13] It also directs to worship eight *yoginīs* while worshipping the goddess Umā, such as, *Jayā*,[14] *Vijayā, Mātangī, Lolitā, Nārāyanī, Sābitrī, Swadhā* and *Swahā.*

This gives us a glimpse of the past when the concept of a goddess with different forms and designations emanating from the consort of *Śiva* was developed. Secondly, the fact remains that the traditional worship of *Śiva* also served to fufil the aspirations of the devotees of offering their prayers independently to the goddess as well. Another point to be noted is that the lord *Śiva* remains as one God, whereas his female part (*Ardhanārīśwara*) or the cosmic energy multiplied with different names and designations. This tradition of multiplication of goddesses is quite in conformity with the concept of *Vāyu Purāṇa*, which states that the female nature of Rudra (*Śiva*) became two-fold, one-half designated as "*asita*" or "white" and the other "*sita*" or black. The white indicationg mild nature, manifested into several goddesses such as, *Durgā, Kalī* etc. The multiplicity of goddesses as primary as well as secondary as stated earlier has again proved the prominence of *Śakti* worship in ancient Assam. This fact would remain unnoticed if one depends for an assessment of the issue merely on the statistics of the *Khetras* dedicated to the worship of *Śiva* and *Śakti*. To make it more comprehensible, we should review the practices of *Śiva* and *Śakti* worship followed during the period.

Śiva and *Śakti* were worshipped here as an inseparable entity at par with the Tantric concept of *Advya brahma tattva*, which means, *Śakti* being merged with the *Śiva* appearing as the one and only. The *Kālikā Purāṇa* says, – here in *Kāmrūpa, Śiva* being united with his consort, *Pārbatī*, fulfils the aspiration of a devotee in a shorter period, for goddess Pārbatī also favours such a devotee of *Śiva*.[15] Further, this fact has been emphasised by giving more importance to *Kāmrūpa* than *Vāraṇasī* as a fruitful *Śivakhetra* since here one could concentrate his meditation on the conjugal form of *Hara-Gaurī*.[16] This is the essence of Śaivism being practised here in Kamrupa from time immemorial. This view would be further clarified in the subsequent paragraphs.

I have stated about the mutual existence of śaivism and śaktism in ancient Assam. With reference to the *advaita sādhanā* of *Śiva* in the past, mention may be made about the Vedic sage, *Vaśiṣṭha*, who for long engaged himself in a deep meditation of *Śiva* at a secluded place near a foothill called, *Sandhyācala*.[17] In his place of meditation, there exist two stony *Kundas* of which, one is of 1m. 30cm. depth and the other is 2½ mt. depth. In the former, 90 cm. below the surface, there is the idol of *Golokeśwar Śiva* in the form of a *linga* and 40 cm. below it resides goddess *Tārā*. At the bottom of the other *kunda*, there is the *Mangaleśwar Śiva* in a conjoint form of a *linga* and a *yoni*. Besides the meaningful placement of the idols inside the *Kundas*, more important is to note that, though the sage meditated on *Śiva* the process of his meditation was not divested from the worship of the goddess.

Further when on the advice of sage *Kāpot Muni*, the two young mendicants named *Betāl* and *Bhairava*, came a long way from near the *Dṛṣadvatī* river of Vedic fame to *Sandhyācala* to meditate on *Śiva* under the guidance of *Vaśiṣṭha*, the sage after deliberating on the intricacies of *mantra*, *dhyāna* etc. for the purpose, also advised them to worship eight *devis* namely, *Bālā Jyeṣthā, Raudrī, Kālī, Kalabikarinī, Balapramathinī, Sarbabhutadamanī, Manomanmathinī*, in order to propitiate Śambhu (*Astau taḥ pujayeddeviḥ kramacchambhośca pritaye*)[18] Then again, after being pleased with the long, arduous penance of these two mendicants, *Mahādeva*, himself unfolded the mystery of achieving supreme bliss to *Betāl-Bhairava* thus: I am pleased with your *tapasyā*. If you two want me to do a favour to you, then worship the *ādyāśakti* the *devī* who is dear to me. Being bereft of her, I am not in position to fulfil your longings. So take refuge in her.[19] These words of *Mahādeva* point out the core-issue of *Śakta Tantra* as has been upheld by the *Saundaryalahari* thus, "*Śiva*, when he is united with *Śakti* is able to create, otherwise he is unable even to move." This is the basic issue upon which developed the theory of *kula-kundalinī sādhanā* of the *kaulas*." Kula means *śhakti* or *kundalinī* and *Akula* means *śiva*. He alone is therefore *kula* who succeeds in uniting *shakti* with *siva*.[20] So the practice of a *Kaula* is an arduous spiritual effort for uniting with the *Brahma*, thereby to achieve elightenment (Jivanmukti). Knowledge of *Śakti* can be achieved through *Tantra* alone for it teaches to realise distinctly the differences of the three qualities of *Pṛakṛti* such as, *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*. "They are called *Guṇas* (Qualities) because they are subordinate to the *Puruṣa* or tie down the *Puruṣa* (Transcendental Self) to empirical life. They constitute the essence of the universe. They enjoy constant companionship and function in co-operation with one another. The equilibrium of *guṇas* is disturbed by the proximity (*Sānnidhya*) of the transcendental consciousness."[21] So the emphasis has been laid on the *Tāntric sādhanā* of *Śakti*.

Sage *Vaśiṣṭha* was said to have achieved this *Kaulajñāna* by meditating on *Śiva*. Acārya Monorajan Śāstrī says: "Of the preachers of *Kaula* school of thought or the initiators of *Kaula sādhanā*, sages *Agastya, Durvāśā* (*Paraśurāma*) and *Vaśiṣṭha* are prominent. The names of *Paraśurāma* and *Vaśiṣṭha* are specifically associated with the religious philosophy of the *Kaula* school of Kamrupa."[22]

MAHĀMĀYĀ, KĀMĀKHYĀ AND TĀRĀ

Goddess *Mahāmāyā* is the primordial energy (*Ādyā Śakti*) which "divulges the hidden truth and shows it by dividing *Pṛakṛti* as three qualities namely *Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.*" This is the divine power of illusion and has been identified as an all embracing goddess. In the form of a woman, she has been infatuating the beings of the world by her *Māyā* (Illusion). In the form of a goddess she has been identified by different names and forms only to serve a single purpose, liberation.

The *Kālikā Purāṇa* says that the goddesses *Mahāmāyā* and *Kāmākhyā* are the same (*sadā Mahāmāyā Kāmākhyā caikarūpinī*). In the form of *Mahāmāyā* she is a divine power of illusion and in the form of *Kāmākhyā*, she is a divine power of primordial desire which pervades the entire universe. The goddess is known as *Kāmākhyā* as she satisfies her desire or *Kāma* in association with the lord Śiva. She is, therefore, *Kāminī, Kāmadā, Kāmā, Kāntā* and giver of *Kāma.*[23] She has also been addressed as *Śiva* (*mohārtham sarbalokānām mamāpi p. rtaye śivā*). The idol of the *yoni* is a typical symbol of 'divine procreative energy' (*Jagatprasuh*).

The goddes *Tārā* represents *vidyā* for it rescues its devotees from the distress and fear of life through enlightenment. *Tārā* is the goddess of highest learning or knowledge (*Ya kālī paramā vidyā saiba Tārā na saṁśaya*). The *Śāktas* worship her as in the symbol of a navel. It, thus, reminds us of the *Kundalinī Śakti* of the *Śākta sādhanā*, which according to this practice, remains at a dormant state at the lowest *ckakra* called *Mulādhāra chakra* of the human body. The Yogins or the *Tāntrics* strive to rouse this dormant energy in a bid to upgrade it for joining with the *Ājñā chakra*, which exists inside the forehead in between the two eyebrows. The practice is achieved by *Mantra, Dhyāna* and worship. The *Tantra śāstra* accepts the *Kaulācāra sādhaka* as being the foremost sādhaka of the seven categories of sādhaka in this line.

It is to be mentioned that a temple, many centuries old, dedicated to the name of goddess *Ugratārā* stands in the heart of the city of Guwahati. Inside the temple there is a small pond of water symbolising the navel of goddess *Tārā*, which is worshipped. The devotees by touching the water of the pond utter the following mantras–

Vaśiṣṭhārādhitā vidyā tārinī nābhirūpinī
tasyāḥ sparśanamātṛena punarjanma na bidyate

(O, the navel shaped *Tārā* worshipped by *Vaśiṣṭha* as *vidyā*, one overcomes the cycle of births simply by touching you)[24].

It is important to note that, while meditating on *Śiva*, sage *Vaśiṣṭha* concentrated his *sādhanā* on the *vidyārūpinī Tārā*. His sole aim was to attain *Brahma* – the absolute or to say in terms of the *Kaula sadhanā*, he strove to raise his *Kundalini śakti* to unite with the *Śiva* through *japa*, *dhyāna* and worship of the *śiva-śakti*. This has been aptly illustrated by the idol of *Golokeśwar Śiva* existing a few centimetres above the idol of *Tārā*, inside the stony *Kuṇḍa* at the place of his meditaion in *Sandhyācala*. The idol of *Golokeśwar Śiva* symbolises the concept of *vairāgya mukti*, that is, non-attachment to discriminative knowledge itself.[25] Once *Vaśiṣtha* had gone from *Sandhyācala* to *Nīlācala* hill to worship goddess *Kāmākhyā* but was debarred from doing so by an arrogant king Naraka. However, this attempt on the part of *Vaśiṣtha* was by no means a deviation from his path of meditation on *Śiva*, rather, this was an effort to enrich the process of his *sādhanā* for the attainment of his goal. This is amply clear from the fact that, being prevented from worshipping the goddess, *Vaśiṣṭha* cursed Naraka saying that he would worship *Mahādevi Kāmākhyā* after the death of Naraka and thereafter he returned to *Sandhyācala* for further meditation.[26]

VAŚIṢṬHA'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE GODDESS UGRATĀRĀ

This part of the episode, which tremendously affected the normal course of life of the ascetic of *Sandhyācala* needs a proper examination for a clear understanding of the whole subject. The *Kālikā Purāṇa* narrates – at the instance of *Śiva*, a reckless goddess *Ugratārā* was out to prevent the sage *Vaśiṣṭha* from doing penance at *Sandhyācala*. An enraged *Vaśiṣṭha* before retiring from his hermitage, cursed goddess *Ugratārā* thus: "since you have dared to drive me out from here even knowing my status as a muni well-versed in the vedas, you along with your attendent goddesses, henceforth will be worshipped by left-hand practices (or against the norms of the *Śrutis*).[27] He also cursed *Mahādeva* and the land saying that, *Mahādeva* would behave like a *mleccha* now onwards and *Kāmrūpa* would be ruled by the mleccha kings."

The inner idea of this incident is that an ominous change had already overpowered the former religious spirit prevailing in *Kāmrūpa* making it reputed as an ideal *yogakhetra*, "*Kāmākhyā* herself admitted of being worshipped both according to the Right hand and the Left hand methods."[28] According to the *Yoginī Tantra*, 29 'the local religion of ancient Assam was of *Kirāta* origin'. They worshipped *Śiva* by offering wine and flesh. *Devī* worship with various rites and rituals got a new boost. The dictum such as, *anyatra biralā devī Kāmrūpe gṛhe gṛhe* (*Devi* is present in every house at *Kāmrūpa*, whereas she is rarely found in other places), indicates the wide prevalence of *Devī* worship at that period. Tāntric Buddhism not only posed a challenge to the Aryan forms of worship but also intruded into the practices of this form of worship. Thus a frenzied lot in the name of religion vigorously adhered to a sort of conglomeration of Aryan, *non-Aryan* and *Buddhist Tāntric practices* in the worship of *Śiva-Śakti*. This trend was spreading menacingly in the religious world of ancient *Kāmrūpa*, thereby pushing the orthodox section of worshippers, *sādhakas*, to the wall. *Kulācāra* in its gross form was also practised by a mixed section of people. The position of *Kaula sādhanā*, in its true form and also its reverse way of performances has been clarified thus: "Some *Kaulas* are called *bāma-mārgī* and are generally believed to be indulging in abominable and ghastly practices. Though most of the *kaulas* must have indulged in such practices on account of their ignorance, yet the real significance of these practices like the five *Mudras* lies in their spiritual interpretation."[30] Though the religious atmosphere in Kamrupa appeared to be gloomy at that juncture, yet all was not lost. The strong reaction of *Vaśiṣtha* against the erratic activity of goddess *Ugratārā* makes it clear that the sage pursued his *sādhanā* in its true spirit and never compromised with any derogatory form of religious practices.[31] In the serene atmosphere of *Sandhyācala*, far from the madding crowd, he steadfastly adhered to his own path of spirituality and became the fore-runner of *śākta kaula-jñāna* in ancient *Kāmrūpa*. He was highly respected and was also recognised as a true follower of *Śiva* by his contemporary sages, those even belonging to other parts of the *Āryābarta*[32] of olden times.

The contemporary sages of *Vaśiṣṭha* were sage *Orbya*, sage *Kāpot Muni*, sage *Paraśurāma* etc. among others. *Paraśurāma* was then undertaking penance in a dense forest known as *Kukkuteśwara* existing inside the present day *Arunacal Pradeś*. Sage *Orbya* installed an idol of *Śiva* at a place now known as *Negheriting* in *Dergāon* (*Devargrām*), a modern town under Golaghat district of Assam. A beautiful temple was built there during the rule of the Ahom Kings. The temple is now popularly known as, *Śivadol* of *Negheriting*. History says that in olden times, this place was known as *Orbyāśram* for the sage, *Orbya* who lived there in a hermitage.

Further, sage *Kāpot Muni* sent two young mendicants, *Betāl* and *Bhairava* to *Kāmrūpa* to meditate on *Śiva* under the supervision of the Vedic sage *Vaśiṣṭha*.

Vaśiṣṭha's antiquity may also be assessed from the words of the great sage *Mārkanḍeya*, who at the end of his discourse on the *Kālikā Purāṇa*, told the assembly of *munis* there thus: "*Mahātmā Vaśiṣṭha* also studied and heard this nectar-like *Purāṇa* from me."[33]

It now emerges that sage *Vaśiṣṭha* was meditating at *Sandhyācala* from a much earlier date than the arrival of *Naraka* at *Prāgjyotiṣpura*. It, therefore, suggests that a glorious tradition of *Śiva-Śakti* worship flourished in this region in the hoary past and the trend has been coming down through the ages. Secondly, *Śakti* worship has always been visualised here as the worship of *Advaya brahama tattva*.

NOTES

Here an effort is made to settle down certain controversies with regard to the development of *Śakti* worship in ancient Assam. Besides, some facts about the subject, ignored so far are brought to light.

1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, 1958. p.89
2. Dr. Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey Of Indian Philosophy*, 2nd edition, 1964. p.390
3. River *Brahmaputra* was also mentioned as *Lauhitya* in the Epics and in other ancient books.
4. R. Swathinathaier, *Indian History*, Vol. II, 1941, p. 106
5. Dr. B.K. Barua, 'Asamar Sāṅskritic Binimoy Āru Baiśiṣṭa'; *Nirbācita Parbandha* (Assamese), 2nd edition, 1990. p. 188
6. Dr. B.K. Kakati, 'Devi Pujār Calti; Banikānta Racanāvalī (Assamese), 1991. p.161

(a) Dr. Kakati's remark on the 'sun worship' in ancient Assam has scope for rethinking, as in the following: The *Gandharba* as narrated in the *Mārkanḍeya Purāṇa*, told those *dvijas*, who practised the worship of sun, to pursue their *sādhanā* in a forest called *Gurubiśāl* at *Kāmrūpa*, for this land was considered as most ideal for the fulfilment of all types of *sādhanā*. As such, it cannot be a criterion to conclude *Kāmrūpa* to be a famous place for sun worship. Had it been so, there would have existed many sun temples in ancient Assam. Instead, we found many places of olden times famous for the worship of *Śiva* and *Śakti*.

(b) Another important point to be noted in this connection is the Vedic version suggesting a similarity of divinity between the gods: *Sun* and *Rudra* (*Śiva*). *Ācārya* Monoranjan Śastrī says: "The essence of *agni*, *sūrya*, and *rudra* are said to have been the same by the *vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. So, the sunshine is called as *Raudra*. Hence, the sunshine, *Kāli*, *Kara* etc. as found in the *Upaniṣads* have been described as Raudraśakti or as *Devī*." (Translated version from the Assamese book, "Puraṇi Asamar Darśan Āru Dharma", p.99-110).

7. Dr. Banikanta Kakati: *The Mother Goddess Kamakhya*, 1989. p.29

8. Kalika Purāna; Sankrit-Bengali edition by Acarya Pancanan Tarkaratna and Dr. Srijib Nyayatirtha.
The Purāna has been considered as one of the prominent and authentic Upapuranas, composed in ancient Assam by some unknown author. It is as old as the Mahapuranas.

9. *Mahādevī mahāmāyāṁ jaganmātarammbikām*
Kāmākyāṁ tvaṁ binā putra nānyadevaṁ yajisyasi. Ch. 38, V-144:

10. KP. Ch. 38. V - 95-96.

11. (*Kirāta*)–They belonged to the Mongoloid family and their king Ghataka ruled in Kāmrūpa with whom Naraka fought and succeeded in driving them away from his kingdom.

12. *bināpi śambhuṁ rudrāṇiṁ bhaktantu paricintayet*
dvibhujaṁ swarṇagourāngīṁ padmacāmardhāriṇim. KP. Ch. 61, V-45-47.

13. (Goddess Jayā)–Ācārya Monoranjan Śāstrī states that, "Abhinavagupta pada has written in the *Tantraloka* that Śivānanda Das, who first introduced *Krama darśan* in Kashmir, achieved the knowledge of *Krama darśan* by meditating on goddess *Jayā* and others at *Kāmrūpa.*: *Puraṇi Asamar Dharma Āru Darśan. p. 108.*

15. *Kāmarūpaṁ mahāpīṭhaṁ guhyād guhyatamaṁ param*
sadā sannihitastatra pārbtyā saha śaṁkaraḥ
nacirāt pujito devastasmin pīṭhe prasīdati KP. Ch. 51. V-64

16. KP. Ch. 51. V-61-62.

17. *sandhyācale tatra munirārādhayati śaṁkaram*
vaśiṣtho brahmaṇaḥ putrastaṁ yubānugaccatam

Sage Vaśiṣṭha was a priest of Ikṣvāku dynasty of Ayodhya, who sojourned to ancient Kāmrūpa to undertake penance on *Śiva.*

Sandhyācala hills located at the southern boundary of the present day city, Guwahati, and at a distance of about fifteen km. away from the *Nīlācala* hills where exists the abode of goddess *Kāmākhyā.* A temple was built at *Sandhyācala* in 1764, A.D. during the regime of Ahom King Rajeshwar Singha. A booklet titled, *Vaśiṣṭḥāsram Devālaya,* written by self and printed in three languages namely, Assamese, Bengali and Hindi are in circulation.

18. KP. Ch.51. V-128-129.
19. KP. Ch. 51. V-185-186.

    Incidentally, the worship of *Śiva* at the temples in Assam was performed in accompaniment with dances presented by unmarried girls, who dedicated their lives for this job. They were known as *Devadāsīs.* This tradition was prevalent up to a recent date.
20. Dr. Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey Of Indian Philosophy,* p.390.
21. Dr. Binod Sarma, *Ethico -Literary Values Of the Two Great Epics Of India.* 1978.p.20.
22. Ācārya Monoranjan Śāstrī, *Puraṇi Asamar Dahrma Āru Darśan.* p. 103-104.
23. Kp. Ch. 62. V-1-2.
24. According to the *Kālikā Puraṇa,* goddess *Tārā* and *Ugratārā* are not of the same category. *Tārā* has been recognised as one of the ten *mahāvidyās* (*Daśamahāvidyā*), whereas goddess *Ugratārā* finds no place there.

    As *Vaśiṣṭha* worshipped goddess *Tārā* in the form of *vidyā,* an effort was made to pronounce the *mantra* with the reference of *Vaśiṣṭha* while worshipping her in a bid to put more weightage on this goddess than on the dreadful goddess, *Ugratārā.*

    Ahom king Siva Singha built the temple of *Ugratārā* in 1607.
25. Mahabharata describes the sublimity of the *Golokdhām* thus: Those who pursue *tapasyā* with sincerity, they by virtue of *vairāgya mukti* and purity of mind are able to view that dream- like *Golok.* There *Yama* attacks nobody, nobody undergoes the pangs of old age and other sufferings.

    –*Anuśāsan Parba Mahabharata* with Bengali translation by Sri Haridāssiddhānta Bāgīś Bhattacharya, Ch. 51, p.16-17.
26. *mṛte tvai mahādevīṁ kamākhyāṁ jagaṭāṁ prabhum*
    pujayiṣyāmyahaṁ pāpa tisṭḥa yāsye swamālayam. KP. Ch. 41. V-17.
27. KP. Ch. 81. V-20.
28. Dr. Banikanta Kakati, *The Mother Goddess Kamakhya,* p.45
29. *Yoginī Tantra,* composed at a much later date than the *Kālikā Purāṇa,* depicts the socio-religious picture of ancient Assam.

30. Dr. Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey Of Indian Philosophy*, 1964, p.390.
31. Buddhist book, *Rūdra Yāmala's* depiction of *Vaśiṣtha* attaining success in *sādhanā* by indulging in the non-Vedic practice of five M's was a sinister attempt on its part just to get an wider recognition of their cult by exploiting the reputation of the great sage *Vaśiṣtha.*
    As this point has not been clarified so far, confusion arises on the role of sage Vaśiṣtha in ancient Kāmrūpa.
32. According to the divisions of *Bhāratabarṣa,* made into five sections during the *Brāhmaṇa* period, the area of *Āryābarta* was extended upon the confluences of Ganges and the *Yamunā* near *Prayāg.*
33. KP. Ch.90, V-31.
    In addition, the following books are also consulted in preparing this paper: *A Sanskrit English Dictionary,* Monier Williams; *Devi* (Assamese), Dr. Nirmalprabha Bardaloi; *Tantra Rasmi*; (Bengali), Sri Asutosh Choudhury. *Religion* - The Gazetteer of India Vol. I page 413.

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Nilima Sharma

Śakti Tradition in Assam

I

"Assam is a dangerous country to invade and the Muslim invaders were terrified not only by its physical features but also by the people who were believed to be great magicians. It is the region where the Hindu and Mongolian cultures met and blended. It is the home of Śakti worhsip and fanaticism".[1] So remarks R. Sathinathaier in his book, *Indian History*. Assam has had a long and profound association with Śaktism. The ancient name of the state was Prāgjyotiṣpura and this name was used the two great epics–Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata–and also in the Purāṇas. In classical Sanskrit literature including Kālīdāsa's *Raghuvaṁsa*,[2] both the names Prāgjyotiṣpura and Kāmarūpa were found to be used. In the fifth century A.D, the name Kāmarūpa was first recorded in the Allahabad inscriptions of Samudra Gupta.[3] The modern name Assam has been derived from Ahom (originally migrants from Thailand) who ruled this land from 1228 to the time of the British rule (eighteenth century A.D.)

Much controversy exists till now on the question whether Śaktism in Assam was pre-Vedic, Vedic, or non-Vedic in its original state. Sir E. A. Gait comments, "... it was in Assam, that the Tantrick form of Hinduism originated".[4] The *Devi Purāṇa*, at the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the eighth century A.D., and Wilson in the preface to his translation of *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* remarks that Saktism had its source in Assam. Eliot says that Saktism "in the sense of a definite sect with scriptures of its own, is not confined to the north-east corner, at least has its head-quarters there".[5] Śaktism as a cult is more personal and esoteric in nature. Being personal in nature, its tenets and history are recorded in a particular class of magical and sacramental literature known as Tantric. It is evident from the *Kālikā Purāṇa* (compiled in the mid ninth century A.D) that prior to the advent of the Śakti cult, Saivism was the popular religion of ancient Assa: *Yoginī Tantra*, another Sanskrit text dealing with the same Śakti cult supports the view. Even in the modern period, Saiva temples outnumber the Devi temples. In the early royal hand grants, neither Kāmākhyā nor any Devi's name was recorded. In the ninth century, the grant of Vanamāla Deva and in the eleventh century, the second grant of Indrapala occasionally mentioned the names of Kāmeśvara—Mahāgauri and Mahagauri—Kameśvara. However *Kālikā Purāṇa* delineates the great power of the goddess Kāmākhya with the instructions of worshipping her along with the performance of elaborate tantric rites and rituals. Absence of reference to Śakti cult in royal inscriptions does not mean the absence of the practice of the Sakti cult prior to Indrapala. There is no evidence that Saktism developed only during or after the reign of Indrapala. Even before the rule of King Indrapala of the eleventh century, Saktism was a living entity in Kāmarūpa.

Kālikā Purāṇa holds that the king Naraka of Prāgjyotiṣpura introduced Śakti worship by establishing Kāmākhya temple in the Nilāchala hill. The territories of Pragjyotiṣpura or Kāmarūpa were than extended upto the river Kartowa including North Bengal. Prāgjyotiṣpura was the name of an inaccessible city—*Prāgjyotiṣam–durgam–pūram*. *Kālikā Purāṇa* claims that when Naraka of Mithila became king of Prāgjyotiṣpura and took charge of the goddess Kāmākhyā, the name of the land underwent a change and came to be known as Kāmarūpa. "The term Kāmarūpa—Kāmākhyā symbolised a new cult, and in exaltation of it, the land itself was re-christened".[6] The *Kālikā Purāṇa* recognizes Kāmarūpa as one Pitha. However, *Yoginī Tantra* finds nine pithas in it, namely, (1) Punyākhya, (2) Madhya Pitha, (3) Nila pitha, (4) Saumara, (5) Hayatāmra (6) Śivatalpa, (7) Varāhī, (8)Kolapitha, (9) Śrīpitha. *Hara-Gauri Saṁvāda* divides Kāmarūpa into four pithas, namely (1) *Ratṇapitha*, (2) *Kāmapitha*, (3) *Svarnapitha*, and (4) *Soumarpitha*. *Kālikā Purāṇa* observes that the original inhabitants of Kāmarūpa were known as Kirātas. They had yellow skin and they used to shave their heads, The Kiratās were addicted to drink and flesh. Pargiter maintains that the Kirātas occupied the vast region of the Himalayas. Some of the

Kirātas were more civilized and friendly in nature whereas some of their tribes were uncivilized and cruel in behaviour.[7] The Rāmāyana describes them as wearing thick top-knots (*kisk-k*). Manu regards them to be Kṣatriyas who gave up their sacred rites.[8] *Kurma Purāṇa* treats all the non-Aryan tribes of eastern India as Kirātas.[9] *Yoginī Tantra* declares that the religion of Yoginīpitha was of Kirāta origin.[10] In later periods of Assam history, the term Kirāta stood for all hill tribes of North-East India. They were known as Mlecchas. As a god of the Mlechas, Śiva did not enjoy the prestigious position for a long time. Śiva worship was gradually over-shadowed by Śakti worship. For example, *Kālīkā Purāṇa* narrates that Pragjyotiṣpur, the land of the Kirātas, was originally the domain of 'Sambhu', but later on Naraka of Mithila, not Naraka of the Epics, conquered the kingdom of Pragjyotispura under the guidance of Viṣṇu and started worshipping Kāmākhya, a *yoni* goddess. Thus Devi worship induced Śiva worship. Saivites were not happy with the introduction of the new cult. They endeavoured to revive their faith in Śiva. However, to popularise Śaktism, Devī worship brought to its fold the local cult of the aboriginal people, i.e., the cult of the yoni goddess in place of the phallic symbol of Śiva. Yoni goddess was recognised as the Mother Goddess. Dr. B. K. Kakti opines that "this mother cult of Kāmākhyā must have belonged to certain matriarchal tribes like the Khasis and the Garos. To win over their allegiance and support and facilitate the propagation of Aryan ideas and customs, royal patronage was extended to this local cult of Kāmākhyā".[11] Dr. Hamlet Barch claims that many of the monuments and flat stones which appear to be Austric in origin are still visible at Kāmākhyā.

Goddess Kāmākhya was gradually brought on a par with Durgā, Kālī etc. who had adorable status in the Mahābhārata and the earlier Purāṇas. As a reaction to the upheaval of the Śakti cult, the Śaivites silently victimised Naraka and the symbol of the Goddess Kāmākhya was found to disappear from the temple. Naraka had a deep association with the Śakti cult from a very early period. The legendary account was that he was born of mother Earth and Viṣṇu was his putative father. He was brought up by his mother in the guise of a nurse named Kātyāyani (a name of Devi); Māyā (suggestive of the name of Mahāmāyā) was his wife's name. It was stated that just after his birth, Naraka placed his head on a skull (*Ka*) of a man (*nara*). Human skull is a symbolical expression of the cremation ground. In his tender age, Naraka was brought up by Janaka, the king of Mithila. It was also stated that probably Naraka was the illegitimate son of Janaka, born of a maid servant of the palace known as Kātyayāni. Dr. B. K. Kakati observes that the illegitimate birth of Naraka points to matriarchal traditions. There are ṣporadic references to the life and achievements of Naraka in the two epics and also in the Purāṇas. So far as temporal relations are concerned, these fragmentary accounts of Naraka's life lacked logical evidence. In chapter no 42 (Kiṣkindhā) of Rāmāyaṇa, Naraka was said to be the king of Prāgjyotiṣpura whose hills and caves were to be searched in order to trace the missing Sitā. This indicates that Naraka was contemporaneous with the events of the Rāmāyaṇa. However this appears to be out of joint as Naraka's death had been mentioned as a past event in the yuddha (69/7). Mahabhārata and *Harivaṁsa* recognise Naraka as the son of Bhūmi, the Earth, and he was known as Bhama to answer the prayer of mother Bhūmi. Krṣṇa awarded the Viṣṇu weapon to Naraka which was handed over to Bhagadatta, the son of Naraka, after Naraka was killed by Krṣṇa. *Kālikā Purāṇa* gives a detailed biographical account of Naraka which also lacks historical evidence, for it has been mentioned that Naraka lived through the two ages of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata. According to *Kālikā Purāṇa*, Naraka received Vaiṣnava Śakti from Viṣṇu. Here Śakti means both a weapon and divine energy emobodied in a female deity known as Goddess Kāmākhyā. When Naraka came to Pragjyotispura, he was familiar with the cult of Śakti as divine energy. During that time, some female principles in Nature were deified and accepted as the manifestations of the Devi. Probably such new adoption motivated Naraka to recognise Kāmākhyā, a local goddess, as a divine manifestation of energy. This was a new addition to the religious tradition of ancient Assam. Naraka also settled twice-born people in ancient Kāmarūpa probably to support the new cult of the Goddess Kāmākhyā. However Naraka's attempt could not be considered as a pioneering attempt in Aryanising ancient Assam. Śaivism also exhibited a blend of Aryanisation and tribalism to a certain extent. Aryanisation became more vivid with the advent of the saint Vaśiṣtha who worked as a catalyst in the socio-political arena of ancient Kāmarūpa. Vaśiṣtha's curses were responsible for the downfall of Naraka and also for the propagation of Vāmācāra (left hand) rites in Śakti cult. Tārā Tantra holds that Vaśiṣtha meditated on the goddess Tārā. *Yoginī Tantra* claims that Vaśiṣtha did so no the Kāmākhyā hill. Buddhist Tantra found Kāmarūpa to be the most congenial place for the worship of goddess Tārā. *Kālīkā Purāṇa* does not support this view. It specifies that Vaśiṣtha cursed Kāmākhyā and went to Sandhyāchala and meditated on Śiva. Till now there is a hermitage in Sandhyāchala known as Vaśiṣthashrama with a Śiva temple in the heart of it. There is also a temple of Ugratārā in Guwahati where the navel of Sati fell according to *Kālīkā Purāṇa.* Although the goddesses like Tārā and Ekajata were regarded as Buddhist goddesses imported from the Bhotas by Nagarjuna in the seventh century, B. Bhattacharyya and Dr. Padmeswar Gogoi opine that Tara Devi was neither Hindu nor Buddhist, she was the oldest goddess of Tibet while Tibet was under the sway of China.

Śakti tradition in Assam considers Goddess Kāmākhyā to be the most dominating deity. Other deities are subdued by Her. Goddess Kāmākhyā as a composite figure absorbed different concepts imported from outside in the different periods of the history of the evolution of the original Mother Goddess Herself.[12]

Kāmākhyā represented as a virgin and as a spouse of Śiva belonged to later periods. Like the other gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon, the origin of the goddess Kāmākhyā was also shrouded in myths and legends. The most well-known myth was that while Śiva, the husband of Satī, carried her dead body in extreme sorrow hither and thither, the genital organ of Satī fell on a mountain which turned blue. The mountain where the Kāmākhyā temple is situated is known as Nilachal.[13] Another myth was that the goddess derived her name Kāmākhyā as she came to Nilachal for the satisfaction of her amour (Kāma)with Śiva.[14] Thus, the goddess Kāmākhyā was also known as Kāmā. According to *Kālīkā Purāṇa*, the mountain Nilachala was both a love-tryst and a grave-yard for the goddess.

Kāmākhyā temple is unique in comparison to other Devi temples of India as it is devoid of any image or idol of the Goddess. The shrine consists of a stone cave wherein lies a block of stone with the curving of a *yoni.* A natural spring is oozing out and keeps the symbol *yoni* moist. The offerings of flowers, earthen lamps etc. are made to the *yoni.* While the *Kālīkā Purāṇa* eulogizes the *yoni* goddess in various myths, the *Yoginī Tantra* does not indulge in myth. *Yoginī Tantra* regards the *yoni* as the symbol of natural productivity. This indirectly refers to the fertility cult of the agriculture age.

Śaktism in Assam took a different turn after the death of Naraka, the king of Kāmarūpa. In the Naraka episode, Kāmākhyā was associated with Viṣṇu and not with Śiva. It was Viṣṇu who discovered her. After Naraka was killed for his lust and vice, Śaiva elements infiltrated into Śakti cult cryptically. The primordial Mother Goddess gradually made room for Śiva and she incarnated herself as Parvati, the amorous consort of Śiva. She remained hidden in Nilachala hill expecting the love of Śiva. It was believed that once Kāmadeva, the god of love was burnt alive by the wrath of Śiva. Kamadeva, the God of love, regained his form as *rūpa.* Hence the place is known as *Kāmarūpa.* Śiva had his hermitages in six quarters of the land and Parvati dwelt in the middle of the land known as the Nilachala hill. Here Śiva could grant boons to devotees only with the approval of Parvati. In the *Devi Bhāgavata,* Kamakhya had been delineated as a *yoni* circle presided over by Mahamāyā where it was believed that the goddess menstruated every month. *Devi Bhāgavata* does not refer to any association of Kāmākhyā with Sati's body. Devi's new orientation as an amorous goddess was found to be related to several legendary tales, and these tabs left some taboos in the ethico-social life of the common people of the state which are even now practised as sacred rites.

Gradually some new features were added to goddess Kāmākhyā. Kāmākhyā was worshipped as Tripura, one aspect of whom was called *Tripurabātā* (the girl tripura) as the symbol of eternal beauty and sex. Both the Dakṣinācāra and the Vāmācāra ways of worship were associated with the goddess Tripurabātā. Left hand worship or Vāmācāra required the worship of an actual living girl, virgin worship was also practised. In the selection of virgins, no caste distinctions were made.[15] Goddess Kāmākhyā was worshipped by both right hand and left hand methods. In the *Vamachari Śakti* cult, a woman was indispensable for making love. Sometimes women were procured by money and force. Mystic tales of Lama Taranatha consisted of many such legends. *Kālikā Purāṇa* grants economic sanction to sexual aberrations practised by Vāmācāra devotees.

In the temple of Kāmākhyā, even the non-natives were allowed to offer worship in their own native ways. Local rites and ceremonies were never imposed on the non-natives. It was believed that Kāmarūpa was the favourite abode of the Devī. She was found to dwell in every house of Kāmarūpa. *Yoginī Tantra* quotes *Kālika Purāṇa* to reiterate that in Kāmarūpa, every woman is an image of the Devi herself and every virtuous man is an image of Śiva. The *Yoginī Tantra* maintains that the virgin worship was borrowed from Kanchipura of ancient Tamil Nadu and also from Uttar Pradesh.[16]

The original Kāmākhyā temple was partially damaged by the Muslim invaders in the sixteenth century. The present temple was rebuilt by Naranārāyana the king of Cochvihar in 1665 A.D. The priests of the shrine were mostly brought from outside Assam. The original priests of the shrine were the Garos who offered pigs for sacrifice.[17]

According to *Yoginī Tantra,* a Śakta devotee had to contemplate on the image of a virgin girl of sixteen and had to physically absorb oneself into that image. He had to believe in God as a woman. *Tripura Rahasya* conceived *Tripura Sundari* as a primoridal energy whose aim was to provide pleasure. She was independent and represented herself as Gauri, Ramā, Bhārati, Kātī, Candika, Durga, Bhagavati, Katyāyani, Parā, Lalita and Śrīmaharajñi. *Tripura Sundari* created nine *Śaktis* and nine *yoginis.* The goddess herself dwelled in the centre of nine triangles placed within one another, the whole being encompassed by one circle. This was called *Śricakra.* Mahatripurasundari was found within the Śricakra. She divided herself in nine parts and presided over the nine triangles. The triangle was called the feminine triangle. Such triangle-figures of the goddess were also found in the temples of Egypt. In the *Kālikā Purāṇa,* Tripura goddess was adored in three aspects as *Tripurabātā* (the virgin), *Tripurasundari* (Goddess of Beauty), *Tripurabhairavi* (the goddess of infatuation).[18] Tripura Bhairavi must be worshipped by left-hand rites. Red flower, red clothing, vermillion etc. were recognised as the favourites of *Bhairavi.* An authoritative account of the worship of the goddess stated that it started with the worship of a picture of the female organ drawn in the centre of another picture consisting of nine such female organs, the whole of which formed the *Śrīcakra.*

The pictures were generally drawn on a *Bhurja* leaf, or a piece of silken cloth or on a golden leaf. On the basis of the ways of worship, the Śāktas were divided into two classes as (1) *Kaulikas* and (2) *Somayins. Kaulikas* worshipped gross material objects, while the

Somayins worshipped the image of the organ. The *Kaulikas* worshipped their goddess by offering wine, flesh, honey and fish. They also indulged themselves in *pancha-ma-karas*, namely *madya* (wine), *māṁsa* (meat), *maithuna* (sexual intercourse), *mūdrā* (cooked cereals), *matsya* (fish). The *somayins*, of course, abstained from such practices. Some Brahmanas also worshipped *Tripurasundari* in the *purva kaula* and the *uttara kaula* ways. The worshippers of *Bhairavicakra* maintained no caste distinctions. During the time of worship, men of all castes became Brahmanas. After the worship, they resumed their own castes. Similar to the rites of *Devi cakra*, certain rites were found to be observed in the different parts of Western Asia, more particularly in Syria.

Another important centre of the Śakti cult is in the extreme eastern part of ancient undivided Assam. It is in Sadiya which is now in Arunachal Pradesh. The Devi temple of Sadiya is known as Tamreswari temple. Popularly it was known as *Kecāi-Khāti* or the eater of raw flesh. *Kālīkā Purāṇa* regards her as the goddess *Dikkaa vāsinī*. She had two form: *Tikṣṇa-kānta* (dreadfully attractive) and *Lalitakāntā* (gracefully attractive). *Tikṣṇa kāntā* was black, pot-bellied and with one lock of matted hair (*Ekajāta*). She was also known as Ugratārā. Her attendants had all dreadful names like *Bhagā*, *Subhagā*, *Camunda*, *Karātā*, *Bhiṣanā* and *Vikarā*. She was worshipped like goddess Kamakhya, however, her offerings included strong liquor, human sacrifice, modaka, flesh curry, coconuts and sugar cane. However, in the second phase, she became known as the most dreadful goddess, Tāmreśwarī, where human sacrifices were offered annually. The history of Assam is silent on the installation of the dreadful goddess Tāmreśwarī. The last Hindu kings of Pala dynasty of that region were Śaivites and Vaisnavites, respectively. The only exception was Indra Pala who was a worshipper of both Śiva and Pārvati. After the fall of Pala dynasty, the Bāra Bhuyans, the twelve local potentates, ruled the region for sometime.

The Bara Bhuyans were Śaktas, and it was during their time that the dreadful goddess, as Sadiya, became known to the people. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the goddess was enshrined in a copper temple. This temple became the centre of worship for most of the hill tribes of the north-east frontier. The priests of the temple are called *deorlos*. The book associated with the worship of Tāmreswari is known as *Tāmrākṣarī.* The *Yoginī Tantra* mentions Jayanti (Jaintia hills of Meghalaya) as the scared place of Devi worship. Jaintia kings were Śaktas and they offered human sacrifice for the propitiation of the Devi. Human sacrifice was abolished in Tamreswari temple during the reign of King Gaurinath Singha (1780-1795). In the Jaintia hills, it was stopped in 1835 by the British rulers. The practices of head hunting and human sacrifice were once followed by the Nagas for better harvests. The Khasis worshipped the snake-god by offering human blood. In the Tipperah hills, human sacrifice was made to propitiate Śiva.

II

Śaktism exists in Assam as a living cult. It admits the reality of the cosmos with its observable and unobservable particulars and treats it as the vehicle of energy or Śakti. It deals with a world of inter-penetrating and inter-acting system of vibration and resonance comprising all human feelings.

There is a pre-theoretical understanding of the creativity of natural phenomena. That is the primary subject of Śakti as creative energy. The concept of Śakti discloses the fact that the world is potent with energy. Energy or śakti is the ontological foundation of being. The world of phenomena uniquely determines the theoretical system. Śaktism uses the totality of the 'primary concepts' i.e., concepts directly connected with sense experiences, and propositions connecting them. Flow of consciousness is kinetic energy.

Śaktism as a whole attempts to integrate the two concepts—Śakti and Śiva. Śakti or energy represents the dynamic aspect of reality and Śiva, the ultimate good, represents the static aspect of reality. Borrowing the concepts of Einstein it may be stated that Śiva embodies potential energy and Śakti stands for kinetic energy. Śaktism accepts Tantra as a systematic method by which higher spiritual powers can be achieved in one's life.

Śaktism seems to be influenced by the *Devi Sukta* and *Rantrisukta* of Ṛgveda which termed the cosmic power as the female form of the Mother. The *Durga stotra* of the Mahabharata, the *Durga-saptasati* of the *Markanḍeya Purāṇa* clearly state the role of the Mother. The Mother cult in Assam seems to combine in it the essence of the Vedic and the tribal cult. The cosmic dynamic energy is symbolised as Divine Mother. It is conceived that the omnipotent, omniscient, all-pervading Mother shines eternally and reveals herself as the universe of diversity. The universe is but a fragmental revelation of her eternal self in conformity with her creative volitions. Śakti is also anthropomorphized as Mother, the source of creativity.

The Mother cult consists of ten forms of manifestation of the goddess which indicate that the goddes possesses supreme knowledge and these ten forms are called *Daśamahāvidyā.* The ten forms of manifestation of Śakti are known as *Kālī, Tārā, Sarashi, Bhuvaneswarī, Bhairabi, Cinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagala, Matangi* and *Kamalā.* Sādhakas worship them for the purpose of spiritual enlightenment. Out of the ten stages of the *Daśamahāvidyās,* in seven stages, Śakti reveals herself whereas in the other three stages, she withdraws the creation in herself. By realising the *Daśamahāvidyās* of Śakti, Sādhakas understand that consciousness governs all living and non-living objects of the universe.

Śakti is also called *Kundalini. Kundalini* drives each individual self to Śiva from which it comes. *Kundalini* as creative cosmic energy has affinities with Platonic Eros and the libido of Jung. Śaktism advocates *Kundalini yoga* as a vehicle for the highest attainment of the *Sādhana.* Kundalini yoga vitalises and activates an occult force lying dormant in the individual. It needs a rigorous process of training of the vital breath and mind which arouses the infinite resources of man with which he is potent and makes him aware of his close rapport with the universe.

In the human body, *Kuṇḍalini Sakti* which remains dormant in the region of *Mulādhāra Kundalini yoga* arouses the conscious energy and guides it to the *Sahasrara* in the cerebrum for union with Siva. It flows through two secondary channels known as *Iḍā* and *Piṅgatā* and reaches *Susmna* while a *Sādhaka* suceeds in controlling the equal functions of the primary and the secondary channels of the conscious energy. He gathers complete knowledge and power to control the transmission and distribution of the flow of conscious energy. Such acquisition of the power and knowledge of conscious energy is known as the 'awakening' of the *Kundalini Śakti.* The awakening of the *Kundalini Śakti* is possible only when an aspirant undergoes a rigorous discipline and practises a specific practical process of yoga under the guidance of a well-experienced Guru. Hence, a sādhaka does not merely depend on theoretical knowledge. He is self-dependent on theoretical knowledge. He is a self-experimenter. In the words of Einstein, "Pure logical thinking cannot yield us any knowledge of the empirical world; all knowledge of reality starts from experience and ends in it."[19] At the heightened state of his experience, a Sādhaka encounters with the knots called *Brahma Granthi, Viṣṇu Granthi* and *Rudra Granthi* and ultimately enjoys divine bliss. At this stage of divine consciousness, he finds no separate existence from the universal Mother and is known as the *Jīvanmukta.* Divine consciousness pervades his physical body in the empirical world. There is no question of withdrawal from the world. Cosmic existence is realised by him with the freedom from his limited situations in life. Thus, the purpose of *Kundalini yoga* is to bring into activity an occult force dominant and yet latent in the individual. It is aroused by a process of training of the vital breath and the mind. Performance of the *Kundalini yoga* enables man to become aware of the immense resources of nature and feel one with the universe.

Although Śaktism deals with most esoteric teachings that are imparted by a guru to his competent disciple as secret and mysterious knowledge, Śaktism has had a profound influence on the socio-cultural life of the people of North-East India. Folk literature of this region is a living witness to that.

The ultimate reality in Śaktism is pure consciousness. It is not bound by space, time, and cause. Śakti as a primordial conscious force is independent of other god-heads. Hence, the supreme being of Śaktism is not a personal god. Śaktism posits the reality of the goddess as the cause of the universe. Śakti is manifested in an infinity of relations. Yet she is not exhausted by them. As a Mother Power, she unfolds herself in the world and again withdraws the world into herself.

With this retrospective analysis, I have made the following observations:

1. Śaktism pleads for the ontological primacy of freedom which is to be realised in one's own experience.
2. The knowledge of the self consists of existential awareness of the inner working of the 'I' which is in the physical world.
3. The attainment of the unitive life with the Divine is the ultimate end. However, there is no reference to *Sarvamukti.*

4. Although emphasis on subjectivity does not mean complete withdrawal from objectivity, yet inter-subjectivity does not find prominence in Śaktism. Śaktism prefers an exclusive solitary dive into oneself. It is in agreement with Professor Whitehead's view that religion is "what the individual does with his own solitariness".[20]
5. The de-mytholization of the myths of Śaktism suggests that it is related to ethics, and it seems to appreciate the retributive theory of punishment. *Devi* worship signifies the destruction of evil and the promotion of altruistic good.
6. Śaktism is guided more by scientific and practical temperament rather than by the spirit of transcendance. It is directly concerned with the experimentation of spirituality.
7. It is an admirable prophecy of Sri Aurobindo's synthesis of Being and Becoming. Being is the basis of Becoming. In the cosmic show of Becoming, Being remains unaffected. The ideal end of Śaktism is not the transcendence of Becoming (as in the case of Iśvarakṛṣna's Sāṁkhya) nor is it the negation of Becoming (as Advaita Vedanta claims). Śaktism unfolds the interpenetration of Being and Becoming.
8. The *Panca-ma-karas* are often criticised as hedonistic in character and they are indignantly treated as the dark blots of the Śakti cult. However, a neutral observation of *Panca-ma-kara's* suggests that Śaktism could anticipate some of the results of laborious pursuits. It indicates that to suppress forcefully the tendency of '*bhoga*' is detrimental to psycho-physical health. Śaktism teaches the motto of '*tyāga*' through '*bhoga*'.
9. Eternal continuity is a characteristic feature of consciousness. Sāṁkhya, Vedānta and Śunyavāda entertain this view. Einstein remarks, "It appeared that in our physical system there was a sum total of energies that remained constant through all changes that might occur."[21]
10. So far as art and architecture are concerned the Śakti temples of the North-East, including Kāmākhyā, depict the simple, artistic, domestic scenes of tribal life instead of the amorous scenes of many of the temples of India.

NOTES

1. R. Sathinathaier, *Indian History*, vol II, p. 106, 1941.
2. Kalidasa, *Raghuvaṃsa*, canto IV, 83.
3. Flect, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. II, p.8.
4. E. A. Gait, *History of Assam*, p.15.
5. Eliot, *Hinduism in Assam*, J.R.A.S., 1920, p. 1153.
6. B. K. Kakati, *The Mother Goddess Kamakhya*, p.6.
7. Ibid., p.284
8. *Manusamhita*, 43,44
9. *Kurma Purāṇa* - 1/46/26.
10. *Yoginī Tantra*, 2/9/13.
11. *Assam Sahitya Patrika*, 16th year, No. III.
12. Op. cit., p.33.
13. *Kālikā Purāṇa* - 64/59
14. Ibid., 64/1
15. *Yoginī Tantra* - 1/77/31
16. Ibid. 1/44.
17. B. K. Kakati, *The Mother Goddess Kamakhya*, p. 37.
18. *Kālikā Purāṇa*, 78/86.
19. Albert Einstein, *Ideas and Opinions*, p. 271.
20. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, p.6.
21. Op. cit., p. 339

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Sujata Purkayastha

A Study of Some Śākta Practices
(With Special Reference to *Kulārṇava Tantra*)

The term *tantra* has a wide connotation and means any system of thought. Conventionally, "Tantra" denotes a kind of literature which stands for metaphysical speculations, ritualistic practices, mystic syllables, magic etc. There are different types of Tantras pertaining to different sects like Śaiva, Śakta, Vaiṣṇava etc. *Kulārṇava Tantra* is one of the important Śākta Tantras which is regarded as belonging to the *Kaula* sect of the Śāktas. This is one of the original Tantras and is regarded as having emanated from the mouth of Śiva.[1] *Kaula* actually means a perfected saint, who has attained unification with Śiva-Śakti in the present life. The word *Kaula* means harmonious relation of Śiva and Śakti. *Kula* means Śakti and *Akula* means Śiva. The relation of Śakti with Śiva is called *Kaula.*[2] *Kaula mārga* is that which accepts and leads to the equipoise of Śiva and Śakti.

Saktism is one of the oldest religions of India. It is so called because it preaches the worship of *Śakti* (power) or God in Mother-form. *Śakti* is the personification of primordial energy, the principal factor in the creation and reproduction of the universe. [3] In Saktism though God is worshipped as the Great Mother, in her real nature she is neither male, nor female, nor neuter.[4] *Śakti* is regarded as the Supreme Power of Śiva, the Supreme Self. But though regarded as the power of Śiva, *Śakti* is actually a substantive entity, the Divine Mother of the world. Saktism maintains that the existence of *Śakti* depends upon Śiva, the *Śaktimān* (Possessor of power), but even then, Saktism places *Śakti* at the highest level, because every action of Śiva depends upon *Śakti.* Without *Śakti*, Śiva is like a dead body which cannot perform any activity.[5] From this angle of view, *Śakti* is the ultimate. Actually, however, according to Saktism, *Śakti* and *Śaktimān* (the possessor of *Śakti*), i.e., Śiva are non-different from one another. Śiva and *Śakti* are inseparable like heat from fire, whiteness from milk, sweetness from sugar, luminosity from light and weight from natural bodies.[6] Śiva and *Śakti* represent two aspects of the same *Brahman* or Absolute: Śiva is the static aspect, which is not concerned with the world process while *Śakti* is the dynamic aspect, the Divine Mother who performs all the cosmic activities and produces the *tattvas* or principles of the world out of herself. Hence, the Saktists maintain that Śiva- *Śakti*, i.e. Śiva and *Śakti*, taken together form the Absolute.[7]

In its philosophical aspect Saktism propounds a type of non-dualism (*Advaitavāda*). The highest and the final aim of this system is *Moksa* or liberation. In Saktism, *Śakti* is regarded as eternal, pure, partless and non dual. *Śakti* is possessed of *māyā* and yet it transcends *māyā*. *Śakti* creates the universe through *māyā*.[8] However Saktism is different from Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara. "Saktism regards creation of the world as real and dissolution of it as real. Creation is unfoldment of Śiva's power of creative will. Dissolution is involution or enfoldment of Śiva's power of creative will. Both are real."[9]

For the attainment of liberation, the summum bonum, different philosophical schools and religious sects prescribe different means. The Tantras, especially the Śākta Tantras, have prescribed knowledge (*jñāna*) as the principal means of liberation. The *Kulārṇava Tantra* emphatically asserts that liberation is attainable only by knowledge and not by any other means.[10] The intuitive knowledge of *Śakti* leads to liberation. This intuitive knowledge is attained by means of *sādhanā* or yogic pactices. The special virtue of the Tantras lies in its mode of *Sādhanā* (practices). The Tantras are, therefore, called '*Sādhanaśāstra*'. They deal extensively with rituals and practices prescribed for the attainment of the purity of mind (*cittaśuddhi*) as also achieving the highest goal, i.e., liberation. It is ritualistic and reflects Yogic practices which can only bring about liberation for the *jīva*.

There are different types of Tantric practices. Some practices are for material results only, while others produce spiritual advancement. *Dīkṣā, japa, puraścaraṇa, homa, śayyā-sādhanā, mudrā, yantra-sādhanā Kuṇḍalinī Yoga, Pañcamakāra-sādhanā, Śavasādhanā, Muṇḍasādhanā* etc, are important practices required in the path of liberation for a *śākta sādhaka*.

According to the *Śākta* Tantras, again, there are different types of spiritual aspirants (*sādhakas*). They are divided into three types, viz., *Paśu, Vīra* and *Dīvya.*[11] These divisions are based on the temperaments or mental attitudes (*bhāvas*) of the aspirants. The *Paśu* is the man (*jīva*) who is bound by the *Pāśas* (fetter). Eight *Pāśas* are enumerated in *Kulārṇava Tantra,* viz., *ghṛṇā* (disgust), *lajjā* (shame), *bhaya* (fear), *śaṅkā* (piety), *moha* (delusion), *kula* (family), *śīla* (custom) and *jāti* (caste).[12] The *Vīra* (heroic) aspirants are those in whom *rajas* works predominantly over *Sattva.* The highest class of the aspirants is called *Divya* (divine) in whom there is preponderance of *Sattvaguṇa.*[13] All the Tantras describe the *Paśu* as the lowest form of the three temperaments and *Divya* as the highest. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* says that the *Divya* and *Vīra bhāva* are absent in the Kali-age.[14] It is only by the *Paśu-bhāva* that men may obtain *mantrasiddhi.* Actually these three *bhāvas* are three stages of the life of the aspirant. In the beginning every man is *Paśu,* because he is under the influence of animal instincts. The term, *Paśu,* however, is not used in any derogatory sense in the Tantras. "*Paśu* is a person who does not have self-control and yet has the desire to have mastery over his passions and impulses."[15] In fact, the *Bhāva* of the first, i.e., *Paśu* is the starting point of *Sādhanā* and that of the last i.e., *Divya* is the highest stage which is the goal. The *Bhāva* of the *Vīra* is the stage in which the aspirant ceases to be a *Paśu* and is on the way to the attainment of the goal, i.e. this is the intermediate stage.

In the present paper we propose to discuss a few of the practices which may be regarded as the special feature of Saktism. Among the many rituals we only select the ritual of initiation, the *Kuṇḍalīnī Yoga* and *Pañca-makāra-Sādhanā* for our deliberation here.

INITIATION

The Tantras assign special importance to the preceptor (*guru*) without whose help a *sādhaka* cannot attain liberation.[16] In reality, Śiva, the supreme Self is regarded as the real *guru.* But he manifests himself through a competent human teacher, who initiates a worthy person in a *mantra* and instructs him in a proper spirited discipline. Initiation is the most important ritual for a *Sākta Sādhaka.* Initiation or *dīkṣā* is giving of *mantra* by the *guru.* The Tantras including the

Śākta Tantras believe that one can follow a particular *sādhanā* only when initiated by the *guru*. The word *Dīkṣā* is derived from the root *dā*, to give and *kṣi* to destroy. It means that by *dīkṣā* the disciple is conferred a divine state or knowledge.[17] *Dīkṣā* serves the purpose of purification of the disciple by destroying his sins. The *Sāktānandataraṇgiṇī* says that *Dīkṣā* is that which generates knowledge and destroys the bonds of transmigration. An aspirant advances on the way to liberation by *dīkṣā* as his impurities (*malas*) are removed.[18] The *jīvas* or the bound souls are enveloped by three types of *malas*, viz., *Āṇava*, *Māyīya* and *Karma*. Because of these impurities the real nature of the *jīva* as identical with Śiva remains obscured. Hence, these impurities are to be removed so that the *jīva* can advance in the path of liberation. The *Āṇava mala* causes the *jīvahood*. Because of this the *jīva*, though in essence is Śiva, thinks itself as limited and bound. This is actually the ignorance which remains in the nature of the *jīva*; this is what is called the *Pasutva* of the *jīva*. By initiation this *Āṇava-mala* pertaining to the nature of the *jīva* is removed. Then only an aspirant becomes eligible for advancing towards his goal.[19]

The *Kulārṇava Tantra* gives a detailed account of *Dīkṣā* and its different types. According to this Tantra, *Dīkṣā* is of seven types, viz. *kriyā, varṇa, kalā, sparśa, vāk, dṛk* and *mānasa*.[20] The first kind is *Kriyā* or *Kriyāvatī dīkṣā*. In this type of initiation there is predominance of different rituals. The *Guru* establishes his own self in the *śiṣya* and performs the *Abhiṣeka* of the *śiṣya*.[21]

The second type of initiation is *Varṇamayī dīkṣā*. The *guru* places (*nyāsa*) different letters of the alphabet on different parts of the *Śiṣya's* body and thus turning these letters in opposite direction ultimately make these letters as well as the disciple merge in the Supreme Being.[22]

The third one is called *Kalā* or *Kalāvatī dīkṣā*. The peculiarity of this type of initiation is that the *guru* meditates on the *kalās*, viz., *nivṛtti, pratiṣṭha, śānti* and *śāntyatīta* in different parts of his disciple's body. Then he initiates his disciple.[23]

In the *Vāk* or *Vācikī dīkṣā*, the *guru* thinks his own mouth as the mouth of his own *guru* and gives divine *mantra* to the disciple together with *mudrā, nyāsa* etc.[24]

In *Sparśākhyā dīkṣā*, the *guru* touches the disciple's head with his right hand after meditating on his *guru* who is none but Paramaśiva in his hand. After that he gives *mantra* to the disciple.[25]

In *Dṛksaṁjñā dīkṣā*, the *guru* meditates on the Supreme Self and then after looking at the disciple with his blissful eyes gives him the *mantra* which can give him *siddhi.*[26]

Mānasa dīkṣā or *Manodīkṣā*, also called *Vedhāmayī dīkṣā* is the most effective form of initiation. In this form of initiation, the *guru* first meditates on *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* in the *Mūlādhāra* of the *Śiṣya* and then by meditation only makes this *Kuṇḍalinī* to rise and pierce the six Cakras of the disciple and to be united with Śiva in the *Sahasrāra*. The disciple then realizes divine knowledge and becomes Śiva himself.[27]

Kāmakalāvilāsa Tantra and *Rudrayāmala* classify *dīkṣā* into three classes, viz. *Āṇavī, Śākteyī* and *Śāmbhavī. Āṇavi dīkṣā* is that in which the disciple should have intense devotion to the Supreme Mother. He should also mediate for propitiating the Divine Mother. In the second kind of initiation the disciple has to worship that deity for whose worship he is qualified. In the third kind of initiation the mere grace of the *guru* is capable of manifesting the state of Śiva and His bliss in the *śiṣya.*[28]

Dīkṣa is again divided into two types, Viz., *Bahirdīkṣā* (external) and *Antardīkṣā* (internal). *Bahirdīkṣā* consists of *pūja, homa* and other external rites. The second type of *dīkṣā* enables the disciple to awaken the *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti.*[29] In fact, "A Master initiates a person in a *mantra* charged with spiritual power, transmits his spiritual power partly to him, and instructs him in the methods of worship, prayer and meditation. A disciple should have faith, devotion, aspiration, vigilance, determination and steadfast endeavour."[30] The concept of *dīkṣā* is also prevalent in Vedic literature. The idea underlying Vedic *dīkṣā* is regeneration, which also prevails in the concept of *Tantric dīkṣā.* However, Vedic *dīkṣā* can be given to the persons belonging to the three upper castes only, while *Tantric dīkṣā* is open to all including the *Śūdra* and women.

KUṆḌALINĪ YOGA

The most widely known *Śākta* practice is what is called *Kuṇḍalinī Yoga*. This is also known as *Ṣaṭcakrabheda.* According to the Tantras, the man is a microcosm (*Kṣudra-brahmāṇḍa*). Whatever exists in the outer universe exists in man. All the *tattvas* propounded in Saktism and all the worlds are within man and so also is the Supreme Being, i.e. *Śiva-Śakti.* The *Viśvasāra Tantra* says "What is here is elsewhere; what is not here is nowhere (*yadihāsti tadanyatra, yannehāsti na tat kvacit*).[31] That is why a *sādhaka* is advised to meditate on the Supreme Power in his body itself. It is held in the Tantras that there are six meditational centres called *Cakras* in human body. These are called *Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipura, Anāhata, Viśuddha* and *Ājñā.* These *Cakras* are within the nerve called *suṣumnā* running through the spinal cord. These six *Cakras* lie parallel to the evacuative organ, the generative organ, the navel, the heart, the throat and the brow respectively. The seventh region beyond these six *Cakras* is the upper brain, the *Sahasrāra* or *Brahmarandhra* which is the highest centre of manifestation of consciousness in the human body and is the abode of the Supreme Śiva.

According to the Tantras, *Mūlādhāra* is the abode of *Śakti,* where *Śakti* exists coiled like a serpent, *Kuṇḍalinī.* Normally *Śakti* remains asleep.[32] This *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* can be awakened by yogic practices. The awakened *Kuṇḍalinī* then proceeds in an upward movement piercing the *Cakras* one by one till she reaches the *Sahasrāra.* There she becomes united with Śiva. Tantra *sādhanā* is mainly aimed at the awakening of this *Kuṇḍalinī* and making her ascent to the *Sahasrara* and to be united with Śiva.

There are various processes of awakening the *Kuṇḍalinī* mentioned in the Tantra treatises. The pre-requisite of the process of awakening of *Kuṇḍalinī* is the guidance of an expert *guru* who is well-versed in this type of practice. Mental concentration with the aid of *Mantra* and other Yogic practices like *āsana, prāṇāyāma* etc. is required for awakening of *Śakti.* After being awakened *Śakti* pierces the *Mūlādhāra Cakra* and proceeds in a upward journey. In this ascending journey the *Kuṇḍalinī* pierces the *Cakras* one by one and absorbs all the elemental forces which are ascribed to the centres. Reaching the *Sahasrāra, Śakti* becomes united with Śiva. From this union issues nectar which *Kuṇḍalinī* drinks. She then starts a downward journey and comes back to her place, i.e., the *Mūlādhāra.* In her descending journey she revitalizes all the *Cakras* with the nectar. This process of *Śakti* going upward and coming down after union with Śiva has to be repeated again and again till a stage comes when *Kuṇḍalinī* rests permanently with Śiva in the *Sahasrāra* and her descent stops for ever. The *Sādhaka* then attains the highest bliss:

being identified with *Śiva-Śakti*; he becomes liberated.[33] This awakening of *Kuṇḍalinī* and her union with Śiva also endows the *Sādhaka* with different *Siddhis* or powers, like *Vāk-siddhi* etc.

Thus, the *Kuṇḍalinī Yoga,* also called *laya-yoga* is a process which results in a state of Infinite Bliss and divinity. As Laslan Prasad Singh observes "It is an inner *yoga* of progression from the human into the divine. It is an esoteric process of mystic transformation and spiritual sublimation."[37] With the union of Śiva and *Śakti,* a man is lost in the world of spiritual beatitude and consciousness and becomes free from the fetters which bind him to the world.

PAÑCA-MAKĀRA

The practice of *Pañca-makāra* is generally regarded as highly objectionable and thought to be derogatory from an ethical standpoint. The Tantras have attained much notoriety because of this practice. But from a close study of the Tantras especially the *Śākta Tantras,* it is evident that this type of *sādhanā* is prescribed in these works for the spiritual upliftment of the aspirant and attainment of liberation. However, these works are explicit that this type of *sādhanā* is very difficult and should be performed with utmost care. This type of *sādhana* is not allowed by the Tantras to be practised in public; they are carefully kept very secret so that ordinary people may not be misled to their imitation.

What is this *Pañca-makāra-sādhanā*? *Pañca-makāra* means the five things having '*m*' as the initial letter in their names. Those are *Madya* or wine, *māṁsa* or meat, *matsya* or fish, *mudrā* or grain (eatables) and *maithuna* (copulation). The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* points out that the five *Makāras* are essential for attaining salvation.[35] The *Meru Tantra* says, wine, meat, fish, parched rice as well as sexual union, this pentad of *Pañca-makāra,* applies to the union of Śiva and *Śakti.*[36] Among these five, the practice with *mudrā* or eatable is not looked upon as objectionable. The *māṁsa-sādhanā* spoken of here includes the performance of animal-sacrifice also, which is dealt with in detail in some *Śākta* Tantras, especially those belonging to Assam such as, *Yoginī Tantra* and *Kāmākhyā Tantra.* But it is the practices with wine and sexual pleasure which scandalize Tantric *sādhanā* the most. How can the enjoyment of these five *makāras* lead one to liberation as these are diametrically opposed to spirituality? The answer to this question lies in the fact that there are two paths in the spiritual endeavour of man, viz., *pravṛtti* or enjoyment and *nivṛttti* or renunciation. Tantra recognizes the path of *pravṛtti*. "Here of course, *pravṛtti* or enjoyment is treated not as the end but as the way leading towards renunciation. For, here enjoyment is affiliated to renunciation through the divinization of the worldly pleasures, or rather, by redirecting our worldly pleasures towards the Divine."[37]

Tantra is a positive method of overcoming the mental tendencies which are natural to human beings. Normally man is dominated by the animal tendencies of hunger, sleep, fear and sex. The practices with *Pañca-makāra* are directed to gain control over these mental desires. The use of these five *makāras* according to prescribed disciplines can lead to detachment and inner purification. But even then utmost care and proper precaution have to be taken to guard against the possible degeneration which may be caused by these types of practices. The Tantras were also very much conscious about this. Religious use of wine, meat and other things are prescribed with sufficient reservation. Use of these things simply for the sake of pleasure and enjoyment is condemned in strongest terms. Severe punishment is prescribed for those persons who take to these *makāras* for the sake of enjoyment only. The *Kulārṇava Tantra* says that heated wine should be poured into the mouth of one who drinks wine for the sake of pleasure alone.[38] Similar punishments are also mentioned in other Tantras for using these things for satisfying one's desire and attaining pleasure only. The *Kulārṇava Tantra* also states in clear terms that, if by mere enjoyment of these things one can attain liberation, then drunkards and meat-eaters will also be entitled to liberation.[39] These *makāras* can lead to liberation only when they are practised according to spiritual injunctions and with proper self-control. This particular form of worship is prescribed only at a very advanced stage of spiritual development when the extreme type of self-control is achieved, when the things that normally cause distraction and degeneration, will lead one to liberation (*yaireva patanam dravyairmuktistaireva sādhanaiḥ*).[40] Hence, not all are allowed to follow this path. A *sādhaka* of *Paśubhāva* is not entitled to practise with the *makāras*.[41] For them some substitutes (*anukalpas*) are prescribed in the Tantras. Thus, a *Paśu Sādhaka* should take coconut water or milk instead of *madya,* red radish, red sesamum, *masura* etc. instead of *matsya;* ginger, sesamum, salt or garlic for *māṁsa* and rice, barley etc. for *mudrā. Maithuna* for them means only surrendering to the feet of *Śakti* like children.[42]

The practice of *Pañcatattva* is prescribed for a *Vāmācārī sādhaka. Vāmācāra* also includes *Siddhāntācāra* and *Kaulācāra.* Only a *sādhaka* of *Vīrabhāva* or *Divyabhāva* is entitled to the practices of *Vāmācāra.* Though this is the most efficacious form of worship, it is also the most difficult of all. The *Kulārṇava* categorically says that the practice of *Kaula* rites is more difficult than walking on blades of swords, holding the neck of a tiger and holding a snake by hand.[43] The *Kaula* rites here mean the practice of *Pañca-makāras.* These five *makāras* are prescribed for the *sādhaka* of *Vīrabhāva* as they are valiant enough to try to attain liberation by confronting the natural tendencies of the mind-body.

The *Divya sādhaka* is also entitled to this practice of *Pañcatattva.* But for them these five things do not stand for the physical wine etc. This type of *Sādhaka* is the most advanced in religious life and as such practice with external things is superfluous for him. For these divine-natured aspirants the five *makāras* have been interpreted not as meaning the gross things of enjoyment but some spiritual attainments or behaviours. *Kulārṇava Tantra, Yoginī Tantra, Kāmākhyā Tantra* etc have recorded these spiritual meanings of *makāras* in great detail.

The subtle meaning of *madya* is not wine or liquor. The mystic interpretation of the word *madya* is the nectar oozing from the *Sahasrāra* at the time of the union of *Kuṇḍalinī* with Śiva. It has already been mentioned that the Kuṇḍalinī being awakened goes to the *Sahasrāra* and becomes united with Śiva there. The *Kulārṇava* describes it thus: From the *Muladhara,* the *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* goes up again to the *Brahmarandhra.* The *Kuṇḍalinī* unifies with Śiva who is the Moon of pure consciousness. From this unification nectar flows in the *Sahasrāra.* The *sādhaka* drinks this nectar. This is real *madya.* What is drunk otherwise is only liquor.[44]

Similarly the practice with *māṁsa* does not mean eating meat. Killing of animals for eating involves moral problem. But the meaning of *māṁsa* is different here. It means destroying the merits and demerits by the sword of knowledge and to absorb the mind in the

Supreme. It actually means to free the consciousness from the bondage of fetters. The consciousness so freed is merged with the Supreme God.[45]

The esoteric meaning of the practice of the third *makāra*, i.e., *matsya*, means controlling the senses and redirecting them towards the self. Eating of fish also means controlling of breath by the process of *Prāṇāyāma*. This is the true eating of fish. The other fish eaters are mere slayers of animals.[46]

Mudrā also does not mean parched rice in this mystic sense. The *Kulārṇava* says that the power (*Śakti*) of an aspirant who is a *Paśu* has not been awakened, whereas the *Śakti* of the *Kaula* is awakened. An aspirant who serves this awakened *Śakti* is called the servant of *Śakti*. *Mudrā* is here nothing but *Śakti*.[47] In some other Tantra it is said that *Mudrā* means detachment from evil company. Keeping with good company, one can attain liberation, while evil company will make one bound.[48]

The last *Makāra*, i.e. *Maithuna*, also esoterically means not copulation, but uniting *Śakti* with Śiva. An aspirant who remains immersed in the divine bliss that ensues from the union of *Kuṇḍalinī* or Parā *Śakti* with Śiva is called a practitioner of *Maithuna*. Anything else is only copulation and such persons are only enjoyers of women.[49]

These are the esoteric meanings of the five *Makāras* by following which an aspirant attains liberation. However, *Tantra* does not ignore the biological and psychological aspects of the human personality. Practice with these five *Makāras* in their popular sense also is prescribed in the *Tantras* for *Vīra Sādhaka* as has been mentioned already. Hence copulation with women is also allowed in Tantra. But this *Maithuna* must be with one's wife whom he calls his *Śakti*.

From our foregoing discussion it is evident that the aim of the *Śākta* practices is to attain liberation which consists in the oneness of the *jīva* with Śiva. The practices which at first sight seem to be vulgar or repulsive from our point of view have an inner meaning and also are conducive to the attainment of the highest goal. It is to be remembered that the *Śākta* Tantras do not preach libertinism. They are as much religious scriptures upholding moral values as any other religious scriptures of the world. The *Kulārṇava* declares that the essential qualifications of an aspirant for *Pañcatattva* is that he must be of good character, he should not be lewd and addicted to drink, gluttony and women.[50] However, though such high morality is attached to the *Śākta* rituals, as regards their application, there is some miscomprehension among the ordinary people. This is unfortunately the reason that vulgarity entered into Tantric rituals and some unauthorized rites prevailed in the system. The Tantras themselves do not authorize these vulgar practices.

NOTES

1. *Kulārṇava* Tantra (KT), 1.1
2. Ibid., 2.31
3. *Devībhāgavata* , 1.2.19-22
4. Cf. *Devībhāgavata* , 3.6.7.
5. Cf., *Yoginī Tantra* (YT), 1.8.13
6. *Śaktisaṅgama Tantra,* Kāli-khaṇḍa, 1.22; 98.92, vide, *Śakti Cult in Ancient India,* Dr. Puspendra Kumar, p. 151
7. Vide, *Tantratattva,* Shiva Chandra Vidyarnava, pp. 28, 112
8. Ibid., p.225
9. Sinha, Jadunath, *The Cult of Divine Power,* p.12
10. KT
11. *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (MT), 1.52.
12. Cf., *Kulārṇava Tantra,* p. 21
13. Cf., *Introduction to Tantra Śāstra,* Woodroffe, Sir John, pp. 59-61
14. MT, 1.54-57
15. Singh, Lalan Prasad, *Tantra Its Mystic and Scientific Basis,* p. 138
16. KT, 1.107
17. Cf., *Encyclopaedia of Tantra,* Vol. I, Sadhu Santideva, p.40
18. Cf., *Śāktānandataraṅgiṇī,* 2.5
19. Cf., *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛtite Ācārya Gopīnāth Kavirājer Abadān,* Paritosh Das, pp. 258-259
20. kriyāvarṇakalāsparśavāgdṛnmānasasanjñayā / dīkṣā mokṣopradā devi saptadhā parikīrtitā // KT, 14.39
21. Vide, *Śāstramūlak Bhāratīya Śakti-sādhanā,* Das, U.K., p, 694
22. Vide, Ibid
23. Vide, Ibid
24. Vide, Ibid, 697-698
25. Vide, Ibid, p. 697
26. Vide, Ibid, pp. 696-697
27. Cf., KT, 14.37
28. *Kamakalāvilāsa Tantra,* 52-53; Cf., *The Cult of Divine Power,* Jadunath Sinha, p. 64

29. KT, 14.78
30. Sinha, Jadunath, *The Cult of Divine Power*, p. 64
31. *Viśvasāra Tantra*, quoted in *Introduction to Tantra Sastra*, Sir John Woodroffe,, p. 34
32. Cf., *Tantratattva*, Shiva Chandra Vidyarnava, p. 318
33. Cf., *Introduction to Tantra Sastra*, Sir John Woodroffe, pp. 135-139
34. Singh, Lalan Prasad, *Tantra Its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, p. 136
35. MT, 5.33
36. *Meru Tantra*, 11; quoted by Singh, Lalan Prasad, *Tantra Its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, p. 144
37. Sinha, K.P., Saktism in Ancient Assam, *The Journal of the Assam Research Society*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1 and 2, p. 12
38. KT, 2.130
39. Ibid, 2. 118-120
40. KT, 5.48
41. YT, 614
42. Cf., *Bṛhattantrasāra*, pp. 472-474
43. KT, 2.123
44. Ibid, 5.107
45. Ibid, 5.109
46. Ibid, 5.110
47. Ibid, 5.111
48. KT, 5.112
49. KT

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Rajat Kanti Das

The Modern Face of Politics and the Lingering Tradition of Kinship

Modernization as a process of change involves a journey through time, which reveals itself in change of context, change of meaning, change of space and dimension. Studies carried out by the Manchester School on urbanization as a form of modernization and the resultant changes focused on these aspects, have become a source of reference for many later studies. Abner Cohen's (1969) explanation as to how cultural symbols and traditional principles of social organization change in meaning when they are moved from a traditional to modern context still remains important. Politics in the modern context has multiple faces and a multitude of representations. But even here, traditional principles of social organization are sometimes invoked.

In the contemporary North-East Indian situation there has been a tendency on the part of indigenous and tribal groups to use the traditional principle of social organization like kinship for political mobilization. In this connection, the study conducted by David Lan (1985) in Zimbabwe in the late 1970s deserves mention. Lan has shown how traditional spirit mediums and old myths gained special significance during the civil war in the late 1970s in Zimbabwe and provided political legitimacy to the new political institution centering around the guerrilla movement. The present exercise makes an attempt to find a new meaning of kinship in the modern situation marked by representations and actions meant for a political cause. My interest here revolves around the use of kinship in politics, particularly the way the domain of kinship enters into the domain of politics and gets changed to be more effective in the present context.

To put it in another way, the community is now provided with a bigger political space with various components, which are not of the same nature, scale and level of mobilization, but which still fall back on kinship for political mobilization. The observations here are restricted to Manipur, but these may apply to some other situations as well.

In Manipur one has to come to terms with a situation marked by the existence of a number of social groups taking the form of ethnic groups, who either fall in the category of a tribe or who make every effort to establish their one-time tribal link highlighting their legendary and mythical origin, history of migration and ritual connections. All the groups, in spite of their common features at the basic level, present a picture of contrast both in form (volume and density in Durkheimian sense) as well as in the process of their successive development. Some of them are not spatially contiguous, some have grown in size and cannot be delimited spatially. This, in other words, means a diminishing interaction between members of a community with space. Moreover, the past interactions in the form of a 'tradition' have little practical bearing today in the sense that it could no longer keep them together as tradition-loyalists. Again, the notion of a 'people', in the sense of a larger group of broadly similar and related individuals and greater in size than individual communities, will give us no clue as to their mode of operation as a group. In the ultimate analysis, the question of 'cognitive recognition' matters most because if a group is not recognized it does not count at all. The question of identity is involved with it. The process of identity formation or identification is inextricably linked with the emergence of the effective polity. The general understanding is, although there has been a growing tribal link with the polity, the polity as such is recognized to be a 'higher order social unit' and is not particularly tribal in origin. This may be stereotyped thinking, but one is inclined to believe that it takes a long time for a polity to be effective in the way it can exercise control over 'others'. The Meiteis had principalities and at the beginning each principality had its own type of kinship, which were area-bound centres. All these centres must have given way to one major centre at the end. A better explanation could be that these centres in course of time became subservient to a major centre gaining prominence in terms of power relations. Just as the unitary nature of the Meitei political system was not achieved within a short period of time, so also tribes were not at the same level of political integration with the Meiteis, which could be attributed to the lingering effect of their traditional social system.

The modern political scenario has seen the rise of a multitude of subnational and supranational polities striving to attain the status of a nation-state. The dynamics of these polities can only be understood by taking into account their encounter with other polities, the state, the national government and even the international organizations in some specific cases. The interactions between polities, in this case those governing the power relations between the Meitei and tribes over a period of time, should be central. The changing political relations, however, start from the 'local' or 'community' and get extended to other formations of modern value or modernities. At the political level, the so called 'traditional societies' have attained or are in the process of attaining a multifaceted character depending on their 'modern' connections. The 'local' here is not something fixed, an almost unchanging entity. As Ferguson (1994) writes, 'anthropological approaches to the relations between "the local" and something that lies beyond it (regional, national, international, global) have taken the local as a given, without asking how perceptions of locality and community are discursively and historically constructed.' The local is now in a position to negotiate with modernities, which speaks of a process of historical growth. One way of studying the local or locality and its interlinkages with the outside world is through kinship. Kinship helps to maintain the internal structure and has a political dimension because the political forces operating at the local level very often draw on kinship as an organizing principle. So the functional role of kinship needs to be examined with a view to identify the areas where it could demonstrate the political intent marked by differential access to power. Given within the limits of the social system there could be a structure where one corporate group dominates and to an extent exploits other corporate groups. The corporate groups have in fact been engaged in a struggle for supremacy. Sometimes, ambiguities crop up and the corporate groups take advantage of them to derive political mileage. Structurally speaking, with marriage dictating relations from within, the whole tribe functions as a closely-knit unit and it paves the way for 'turning the same into a political community' (Goswami, 1988). In the changed situation marked by a process of political subordination and superordination, kinship representations have assumed new significance to power relations redefining community status.

The dynamics of change may reveal that the kinship system as it operates now is different from what it used to be. The traditional system of kinship and alliance has either been non-functional or reduced to an inconsequential position. There are very few tribal groups today who have not been affected by social stratification leading to social and economic differentiation. The situation today is marked by pluralism, which shows itself in the field of power relations. Size and numerical dominance now determine the distribution of political power and access to the sources of political power on the part of specific communities. Side by side, forces of ethnicity, autochthony and exclusion along ethnic lines have made their presence felt in a big way and many of the communities have directly been involved with these. It has given rise to diverse polities and many of them have formed alternative 'imagined communities'. They have provided alternative scripts of belonging as a against citizenship in a nation-state. In a bounded system the principle of kinship works with locality and territoriality to set in a process of identity reckoning, which takes the form of a mechanical expression. With society attaining more and more complexity, the process of identity formation and boundary maintenance are more self-consciously fashioned than has been the case earlier. The question of identity has become an important issue to the tribes mainly because of their apprehension that in course of time they would be completely swamped by those wielding more power at the political level. They want their own community to be the political base for them, which would enable them to attain a level of political unity brought about by common ethnic and cultural expression. The concept of community in that case needs to be changed. Community now represents a mode of relating and interacting, not so much based on normative considerations, but on the exigencies of circumstances invoking modern notions of 'contractual relations in complex society' (Stein, 1964). This may explain why tribes keep on oscillating between culture-bearing groups and nation-states, depending on the situations they are placed in.

From the latter half of the twentieth century there has been a sudden rise in the scale and importance of 'neo-tribes' taking the form and character of ethnic groups. Ethnic groups have rather been created as an indicator of 'otherness' in relation to the dominating force – the force which is recognized, accepted, propagated, imposed or thrust upon. Ethnic groups have now been increasingly exposed to modern forms of nationalism dominated by the intricacies of modern politics as perpetrated by the state. Politics in common usage is concerned with the meaning of policy decisions which affect how people order their affairs and control their resources. Politics today has an abiding influence on the pattern of life. As Ken Minogue (1967) puts it:

"In modern nationalism politics comes first and national culture is constructed later."

Even if a community indulges in politics, it is necessary for it to draw on its resources. With resources comes the question of control and hence the manifestation of power. Resources, however, should be productive and power may be understood as control over productive resources. Though the concept of power is different from that of authority, which is linked to the notions of Tightness and proper order, in the actual field it may not always be possible to delink authority from power. The ruler with authority may control resources and at the same time he may function as the benefactor to society, which treats him as a 'moral leader'. Goran Aijmer's (1979) observation that in some societies 'authority' is transferred from its traditional carriers into the usurping group in need of some sort of 'cosmic justification' brings out only one side of the picture. He also notes that in some societies in South-East Aisa 'one finds an ubiquitous bargaining process in which authority and power are constant issues, the relation between the two never becoming completely resolved.' Aijmer cited the example of Laos, where *Lao*, the inhabitants of the heartland under rice cultivation, were rooted to kingship, whereas the *Kha* or the hill-dwellers and swidden farmers had chieftainship. The original inhabitants were the hill people, but they had given up their legal territorial claims and accepted Lao political dominance. Why did they do so? One reason could be the supposed affinity of the royal lineage with divine power. Although the *Kha* maintained symbolical control over the territory only in the form of ritual rights, they could maintain traditional authority through kinship. Aijmer's understanding of kinship deserves mention. Kinship, according to him, "is a symbolic system of political consequence in that it prescribes ways of ordering such dominance, relations as are accepted in terms of traditional authority." Here tradition was allowed to continue by the use of ritual kinship expression and by doing so power was reconciled with authority. Absolute territorial rights had given way to ritual rights connected with territory, while accepting Lao political dominance. A type of hierarchic arrangement between kinship and territorial rights enjoyed by tribal chiefs was implicit here. This was the situation when the modern political system in the form of state is yet to make inroads into the traditionally defined power structure.

Outwardly at least, a more or less similar situation could be worked out in Manipur. Here the Meitei, being the largest group in the valley practicing rice cultivation and who had kingship, had an edge over the surrounding hill tribes organized under chiefs and village council leaders. The Meitei had kingship and were in a position to exercise political dominance over tribes. The Meitei kings had assumed divine power, which was almost a license for them to exercise greater political power. *I Nongda Lairein Pakhangba,* the mythical king of Manipur, was raised to the status of a *Lai* (God). He was also considered as the representative of the people (*Mee*), who were ritually bound to accept him, as their ruler. *Thangjing Koirel,* who was the progenitor of clans and lineages, was considered to be a Godly King. He was also supposed to have travelled extensively to alien lands, driven away enemies and protected the loyal. These may be taken as examples of reconciling power with authority. In any case, the Meitei-inhabited valley represents the core because kingship grew and flourished here. This was the source of kingship because here lay the productive base. Kinship tends to support an ideology of power and there are kinship expressions regularising political dominance. Some tribes have assigned Meiteis the position of elder brother. The Meitei king was even raised to the status of father, a symbolic expression of progenitor and protector. He was entitled to receive a part of their product and labour. As a sovereign, the king was supposed to fulfil the role of not only an elder brother but also that of a father. There were even attempts to support such relations with an ideology relating some tribal groups to the Meitei mythical ancestor *Pakhangba,* the Snake God.

Today, communities living in Manipur and for that matter almost the whole of North-East India follow a 'political agenda' in one form or other. The agenda may be kept hidden or made explicit, and it all depends on the strength of the community. The point is how and in what specific manner it has affected the kinship-based structure?

There has been a tendency to manipulate the principle of kinship imparting a new meaning and finding a new range of application, particularly in the field of politics. The kinship groups are now subservient to the community's political aspirations and as a result, the competitiveness and rivalry inherent in the system have been openly displayed involving a greater space where a number of groups participate either as co-partners or rivals. In the contemporary situation 'display' at the socio-political front occupies a place of importance. Following Clifford Geertz, it may be said that display of political struggle or rivalry is the medium for competing for status. In 'Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali' (1970), Geertz made an attempt to develop theatrical models of displaying political rivalry. According to him, the central theme is by displaying the overlapping and competing social units which exemplify the state. What is implied is the dictum that government has theatrical functions and these functions touch upon politics not exactly in the way it is practised but in the way it has been conceptualized by the competing units.

"It has been the central argument of this work, displayed by the very division of its content and directive throughout the whole of its unfolding, that the life that swirled around the Punggawas, Perbekels, Puris and Jeros of classical Bali comprised such an alternative conception of what politics is about and what politics comes to. A structure of action, now bloody, now ceremonious, the Negara was also, and as such, a structure of thought. To describe it is to describe a constellation of enshrined ideas,"

Geertz prefers to work with exemplars in the form of political behaviour rather than images, whose political content, if there is any, is imperfectly known and rarely explained in public. Using exemplars could be a deliberate political strategy for which Geertz frequently cited Goodman, who had worked with literary exemplars. To exemplify is to display: an exemplar is one who displays in public. It could be an event, an action, an idea – all symbolizing a new political order or recreating the past. Geertz rejects the languages of images to avoid the distinction it imparts between ideal and real, and between subjective and material. Maurice Bloch's (1986) line of interpretation revolves around bouncing between two walls: one the functionalist, realist, practical, politico-socio-economic kind of interpretation and the other symbolic, idealist, ideological, subjective kind. No such distinction is maintained by Geertz. But it cannot be denied that in specific cases exemplars convey only specific meanings. What is important is the specificity of the situation. Be it display or exemplification, the intention is clear. Both have a political intent based on the community's self perception about the situation and about the further course of action. At present a community's involvement with politics is much deeper and self-projected. It is not just something to be understood and accredited with. A community now announces its political involvement in public and while doing this it also uses exemplars. In exemplifying, all kinds of symbols which stand for material reality as well as symbolic or ideological side of it are kept in use. Geertz has deliberately jumbled together all kinds of symbols and signs in order to reject emphatically a distinction between material reality attributed to things signified and subjective immateriality attributed to symbols.

"Ideas are not, and have not been for some time, unobservable mental stuff. They are envehicled meanings, the vehicles being symbols (or in some usages, signs), a symbol being anything that denotes, describes, represents, exemplifies, labels, indicates, evokes, depicts, expresses- anything that somehow or other signifies. And anything that somehow or other signifies is intersubjective, and thus public, thus accessible to overt and corrigible *plain air* explication– arguments, melodies, formulas, maps and pictures are not idealities to be started at, but texts to be read; so are rituals, palaces, technologies, and social formations."

What, however, matters is public acceptance, which ultimately contributes to public knowledge. Public acceptance cannot be uncritical, and it sometimes expresses the controversy on politics or morals and values. If the purpose of a public enactment is to depict the ongoing political struggle, it could be imagined that a greater number of political variables come to play in the event. In such an event it does not remain confined to the community members only, but there will be the official governmental representation or opposition, the actual performers and their followers representing other population groups, the hardcore elements and of course, the invisible hands of those against whom the struggle is directed. The display here is the display of solidarity which submerges all differences from within. The feeling of oneness is comparable to kinship producing kin group solidarity. Symbols and sentiments that go with kinship can prove quite handy in organizing a public display of hidden or overt programmes of action.

Political movements in Manipur have seen polarization of ethnic sentiments involving the Meitei and various tribal groups. Though each wants to pursue its own course of self-representation, political aggrandizement combining the efforts of all the constituent groups has also been pursued vigorously. The underground outfit of Manipur, the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), which was formed on November 24, 1964, has a number of tribals in its rank. What is, however, ethnic is not simply an ideology; it brings into effect something like the order of law (Schneider, 1969), which 'is law in its most general sense of law and order, custom, the rule of law, the government of action by morality and the restraint of human reason.' Ultimately, it is left to the popular form of government to enforce the order of law. The popular form of government is the one which is the most acceptable one, which has got the support of the people, emotionally linked with it. Maintaining an order has a social cause and at the societal level the basic principle is to create an 'order', which becomes a political function.

Initially, the tribal communities were brought within the state formation process through domination, conquest and occupation by the powerful Meitei kings. The basic mode through which their domination was rationalized was the tributes. In some cases, the tribal people were accommodated by the presentation of annual tributes and participation in a 'cycle friendship ritual' *(Mera Haochongba* for example). The literal meaning of *Mera Haochongba* is "cheerful dancing or merry making of the *hao* in the month of Mera (Oct-Nov.)". The term *hao* in all probability refers to the hill tribes. In common parlance it carries with it a derogatory note. But, of late, the intellectual circle, both Meitei as well as tribal, have taken pains to explain that there is nothing disparaging about the term; it has both Meitei and tribal roots. If Geertz is to be believed, the whole exercise amounts to a political strategy to forge unity between Meitei and the tribals. *Mera Haochongba* is now regarded as a common festival of both hill and valley people. During the king's time, well-dressed tribals representing different communities used to come down from the hills and gather at 'Kangla', the old capital with tributes (presentations and gifts, according to the contemporary scholars) and perform community dances. Today, the occasion is marked by festivities, sports, exchange of pleasantries. As an exemplar, it is collectively constituted and collectively agreed. Clearly, rituals form an important component for public display in Manipur.

In this regard, the concept of 'Ritual Theatre State' could assume significance. The term was applied by Lokendra Arambam (1986) in the context of Manipur. Incidentally, Lokendra Arambam was among the leaders of 'Apunba Lup' spearheading the movement against the 'Armed Forces Special Powers Act'. He along with some others was in favour of giving a new dimension to the historical process of state theatrical performance. Here ritual expression finds a stronger symbolic representation unfolding the inner spirit and moral values. It is not just that the present has shaped the past, but the past which has shaped the present and the link is obviously ritual. A community ritual emphasizes and reaffirms the 'sentiments of collective loyalty'. Not only that, the sense of identity and social cohesion is reinforced by the performance of community rituals, which also determines the social content and behaviour of a group. They may reflect the changing aspects of society, which signal creation of a new tradition and redefinition of the old one. The modern art forms and literature have a ritual content and ritual symbols are sometimes used as exemplars. Ritual expressions signify almost an uninterrupted continuance of tradition, though not always in the same style and form. As has already been pointed out, the use of rituals as exemplars is a common practice. But why it is done? The use of exemplars by the Dinka of North Africa as reported by Godfrey Lienhardt (1987) is worth mentioning. A Dinka rite mimes a wish, the miming articulates an intention and when the community kills an ox to eat together, it enacts some of its complex intentions about itself. At the community level rituals are not mere performances; they symbolize the hopes, aspirations and intentions of the community. They might have started as mechanical expressions, but today the focus is more on their intentions, reflections on life with all its demands. The Maring ritual *Chimkhe*, which actually implies the ceremonial inauguration of the granary, includes among other things erection of a bamboo pole with a wooden replica of a horn-bill *(pulang)* at the top. The beak of the wooden bird points towards the Kabaw valley of Burma (Myanmar) on the east, where the bird is very common. The bird actually symbolizes their link with Chaptam Lamal, a legendary village in the Kabaw valley believed to be the first producer of agricultural crops grown in plenty. By performing the ritual the community wants to be blessed with bountiful agricultural crops. Similarly, Madagascar's Marino custom of immuring the dried bones of the dead ancestors and erection of tombs has been interpreted by Maurice Bloch as exemplars of resistance to the ravages of time and not just symbols of continuity. Can a similar interpretation apply to the Maring burial custom of disposing the dead body and erecting a memorial stone over the burial place? Rebelling against time may be one dimension, but more important perhaps is its focus on the human side of it where both living and dead are interwoven into something like a bonded entity. A concept of ritual kinship develops around both. In the present context it is important to note that ritual kinship may crystallize into a symbolic type of political system prescribing ways of defining such dominant and privileged relations as are accepted in terms of a traditional value system.

The politics of kinship and the politics behind the formation of government may represent different domains, but it cannot be denied that very often cultural elaboration of kinship has a political overtone, which has a bearing on the state. With anthropologists turning their attention to such constructs as 'the idioms of equality and inequality', 'multiplicity of voices', mode of power and transfer of authority, rise of nationalism and indigeneity, kinship representations and behavioural intricacies involving kinship sentiments have assumed a new, added meaning. This has opened up a line of approach relying on interpretation. The pioneering attempt in this direction has of course been made by Clifford Geertz. Victor Turner's (1967, 1974) emphasis on the phenomenon of'liminality'–or 'the liminoidal', as it was called by way of distinction–exposed the limitations of a purely structured model. His study of the Ndembu had revealed that while Ndembu society was conceived of as a structure and classification of positions, standards, behaviours, customs, rights and duties, their ritual periods and processes amounted to inter- or extra- structural situations marked by great changes in behaviour, world view and expectation. Certainly, liminality was the main focus of ritual activity among the Ndembu. Liminality calls for adopting new identities, new perspectives on life, on people themselves. The phenomenon could be seen to apply to a great variety of institutions, practices, movements, situations, roles and persons. Not only ordinary people, but special categories of persons like priests, pilgrims, monks and nuns, ascetics and hermits, hippies and new-age travellers, and even revolutionaries come within its purview. Their nature was characterized by something of 'the anti-structural, the transitional and processual, the creative and re-formative, the reversing, resistant and rebellions, the communal and communing.' A matter of great significance was their almost total defiance of all normative considerations. They stripped themselves of normative everyday points from which 'the social structure could be critiqued and re-formed to their advantage.'

One may probably focus on activities of pro-nationalists and political separatists from this angle, not so much for justifying their activities but for finding a plausible explanation for their way of looking at things. What was ritual indoctrination in Turner's case may be taken as a form of political indoctrination in the case of the protagonists of movement for political sovereignty. Political course of action seeks support from the ritual content. Thematically, both political action and ritual substance rely on 'symbolic statements about the social order' (Leach, 1968) and both are allowed to play themselves out as theatrical performances. These sometimes imbibe the spirit and character of 'rituals of rebellion' (Gluckman 1982 1956). 'Rituals of rebellion', according to Gluckman, allowed people 'to behave in normally prohibited ways...gave expression, in a reversal form, to the normal Tightness of a particular kind of social order'. 'Normally prohibited ways' may mean shunning the path of violence, refraining from coercing and murdering people in open defiance of the established order. But at the functional level, running a parallel system of control contradicts and even challenges the existing system in operation by justifying the armed struggle and decrying the state. Kinship-based traditional order is almost a thing of the past, but kinship sentiment is infused on a bigger scale to achieve a political goal. As an organizing principle kinship might have lost its importance, but the spirit still counts.

In Manipur, the object of a theatrical performance given mostly by the Meitei actors and adopted by some of the tribals is sometimes to make the audience reflect on their conditions of existence or to take political course of action in view of their tormented 'self. Here the efficacious side of ritual is given prominence. Nationalistic sentiments have also pervaded the tribal groups in a big way, which find expression through politicization of traditional tribal loyalties. To some extent kinship has provided the foundation of 'traditional particularistic loyalties' getting transformed into a political force of greater dimension. At the same time, they have been engaged in a passionate search for authentic expression of their brand of nationalism in the form of folk customs with traditional colour patterns, design, styles, music, art, metaphors and other literary representations, cultural and social symbols. But ultimately what matters most is performance with a view to justifying the authenticity of expression and interpretation for attaining political legitimacy. Significantly the same authenticity of expression is perceptible in the kinship world as well. Search for new meaning, legitimacy and authenticity of expression in the political field is a modern development, but its roots may be traced back to the tradition-bound society, the link being provided by kinship. This is the reason why tribal politics, while striving for a national base, still nurtures an earlier tradition based on the 'we' feeling and in-group solidarity.

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R. Zolawma

From Tribal Community to Global Community:

Impact of Modernization on Communitarianism

The paper aims at revealing the impact of modernization on tribal communitarian life in Mizoram. When modernization, with its concomitants, British imperialism, Christianization and globalization collided with tribal society, both positive and negative changes were bound to take place. There are two conflicting views, positive and negative, with regard to the impact of modernization on Mizo communitarianism. The paper, therefore, is a modest attempt to arrive at a conclusion on the issue, whether tribal communitarianism is getting weakened or strengthened by the process of modernization. Before we begin our enquiry, some preliminary remarks are in order.

CLARIFICATION OF THE TOPIC

Modernization, according to Max Weber, is the spread of technical rationality into various domains of life.[1] It is embedded in the scientific world view. And it has connection with levels of diffusion of scientific knowledge, technological skill and technological resources in a particular society.[2] Modernization carries a process of change in all fields and also indicates a transformation of society such as the social, the political, the economic, the technological, the cultural, the psychological, the literary and the intellectual.

As modernity is generally thought to flow from the West and the North to other countries of the world in the Southern and Eastern parts of the globe, in this paper, modernization is understood as Westernization simply because modernization in Mizoram in particular started with the Western contact. Therefore, Modernization of Mizo society means the impact of Westernization (British administration, Christianization and globalization) that resulted in transformation or change of a society from a rural and agrarian conditions to secular, urban, and technological conditions.

METHODOLOGY

Data are gathered from interdisciplinary written documents of both national and international scholars. However, as the author belongs to the theological community, he does not hesitate to heavily rely on the writings of theological scholars and educators who are also interested in tribal studies. The paper is primarily a *critical synthesis* of different views and ideas from a community centric perspective.

1. COMMUNITARIANISM: TRIBAL LIFE PRINCIPLE

Communitarianism is a life principle of tribal community in which a homogenous people live together, sharing their joy and sorrows in mutual love and care.[3] This communitarianism is beautifully expressed in Mizo as *Dam leh tlang khatah, thih leh ruam khatah* (live together and die together), and as *a thlum a al ei za* (eating the sweet and the salt together).[4] A similar expression is made by C.S. Song, when he states, "it is suffering together, and loving together. It is this togetherness that makes a community a community".[5] The fundamental idea of communitarianism is that human beings are essentially communitarian as Martin Buber says, "In the beginning is the relation."[6] This is a common characteristic and integrating principle of the tribal societies.

This communitarianism of Mizo society can be understood properly with the help of their understanding of God, Humanity and the three vital cultural agents or the three triangulating aspects of their culture, *Zawlbuk, Tlawmngaihna* and the egalitarian principle. In what follows, we shall mull over in brief the bases and agents of this community centredness of Mizo society.

1.1 Bases of Mizo Communitarianism

Communitarian Understanding of God

Mizo communitarianism reflects their understanding of God or gods which may be explained as communitarian, in the sense that there is no hierarchy in their understanding of the family gods. Even though they have the idea of a supreme spirit and spirits, these spirits had been remembered according to their functions. This communitarian understanding of God has some similarity with the doctrine of the Trinity in Christianity, particularly, with regard to the functions of the three gods, *Pathian* (Holy Father) *Khuanu* (goddess) and *Vanchung nula* (maiden or daughter). Hminga has commented that the Mizos seemed to think of *Pathian* as living in the heaven with a family just like a human family, *Pu Vana* (the grandfather Heaven), *Khuanu* (Pathian's wife or Mother goddess) and *Vanchung nula* (maiden in heaven above):

> ...just like the Christian doctrine of Trinity- Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the traditional Mizo concept had a triune god idea in the Pathian family- grandfather, a wife and a daughter.[7]

It is reasonable to say that belief in this communitarian God (reality) has deeply influenced the Mizo people to sustain a communitarian spirit in society.

Communitarian Understanding of Humanity

Tribal people perceived humanity more in terms of the community, rather than of the individual. For tribal people, a person's humanity could not be realized unless she or he was in community. In traditional tribal society, those who lived in a village usually belonged to a particular tribe or clan. They were closely related to one another, and maintained a particular system of social organization based on family ties and blood relationship. Particularly among the Mizos, every village had a chief, under whose leadership the village became a well-knit community. The chief ruled over the village and a council of elders, appointed by the chief himself, assisted him in the administration. Although the chief held absolute authority over the village, his mode of life and dress were not different from those of the common people. Similarly, though chieftainship was hereditary, there was not a particular chiefly clan among Mizos. Any person could become a chief provided he had followers. Therefore, among the Mizos, if the chief acted "in a cruel manner, his subjects would be likely to migrate to another village with a more benevolent ruler."[8]

To be human in the traditional tribal worldview was to live in relation with others in a community. Even though there were no written constitutions, rules or regulations; the system of life was based on interpersonal relationship. People lived together in mutual trust and respect for one another. Their houses had no locks and keys and yet theft was hardly known. In the traditional Mizo house, a firewood stick was simply placed to obstruct the doorway, and it was quite sufficient to keep any person from entering the house.[9] This community consciousness or understanding of humanity in relation to community had been developed in a long process and kept alive by their cultural traditions. In what follows, we shall look into the vital cultural agents that uphold and strengthen the community consciousness among the Mizo people.

2. AGENTS OF COMMUNITARIANISM

Zawlbuk, Community home

The *Zawlbuk* was a Mizo community home, which met the socio-cultural and educational needs of the community. Zawlbuk is described as a community house, dormitory, bachelor house, village house, and community hall. It is a common practice of various tribes in the world to construct a large house in the village for the community, particularly for bachelors to sleep together.[10] The existence of Zawlbuk testifies that in pre-modern Mizo society, community rather than individuals occupies the centrality. The primary functions of Zawlbuk for Mizo community may be summed up as follows:

The Zawlbuk served multifarious needs of the village. Since it was the time when human enemies and wild animals perpetually threatened the villages, and there was no formal educational system, the importance of the Zawlbuk in the life of the Mizo community cannot be overemphasized. The Zawlbuk was a refuge of the village;

an educational institution; and a guardian of community ethics, etc. In the process of modernization of Mizo society, this cultural symbol became non-existent.

Tlawmngaihna, the Community ethics

The contribution of the *Zawlbuk* to Mizo society was the development and perfection of *Tlawmngaihna.* Tlawmngaihna is the term used for the Mizo "code of morals",[11] a "highly prized virtue"[12]and "a wonderful philosophy of life".[13]

Tlawmngaihna is Mizo community ethics, and it is the life of the Mizo as well. Every Mizo tries to demonstrate this finest character in social life and activities. The spirit of Tlawmngaihna has been infused in the minds of the Mizo young boys and girls. Outsiders who did not understand the concept of Tlawmngaihna often thought the Tlawmngai Mizo foolish. Hrangkhuma Fanai described interestingly about Mizo Tlawmngaihna in the sight of other cultures by citing an incident in Shillong, Meghalaya. He said that when young Mizo men first studied at Shillong (outside Mizoram), they showed Tlawmngaihna by digging graves as they did in Mizoram. The local people, Khasis, used to say, "the Mizo like to dig graves". They did not understand that Tlawmngaihna required one to do something as if she/he enjoyed doing it.[14] Chatterji stated, "Tlawmngaihna to a Mizo stands for that compelling moral-force which finds expression in self-sacrifice for the service of others."[15] Keeping justice, peace and welfare of others was the purpose of Tlawmngaihna.[16] Without Tlawmngaihna, it would not be possible to build a communitarian society and it would not be possible to build a harmonious society where members of the community practiced decision by consensus, sharing their joy and sorrows, and caring for one another.

As stated above, Tlawmngaihna in the past was the heart and soul of Mizo society as well as the pride of the society. However, as the Mizo society could no longer live in isolation, there have been outside forces that encountered Tlawmngaihna, *as* a result, the meaning and function of the Tlawmngaihna were bound to change. People who are not satisfied with the present Tlawmngaihna expressed their wishes to recapture the past Tlawmngaihna. Their longing for the past Tlawmngaihna was superbly expressed in the song composed by one of the famous song writers, Rokunga.[17]

Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism is a belief in equality among all members of the community. Egalitarianism is an absence of racism, caste discrimination, and classism. Laltluangliana Khiangte has rightly expressed the Mizo society in past:

> The Mizo society has no class distinction and no discrimination on the ground of sex. The village exists like a big family and the chief as the father and ruler. Birth of a child, marriage in the village, death of a person or a community feast of any kind arranged by a member of the village and those of yearly festivals were important occasions in which the whole village was involved.[18]

How could that be possible? According to H.L. Malsawma, it was Tlawmngaihna, the core and living blood of Mizo social life that ties the individual and family together in an integrated caste-less society where safety is ensured.[19] In egalitarian society, everyone lives freely, nevertheless, abiding by a set of rules, customs, and traditions. K. P. Aleaz who is a non tribal scholar has rightly observed, "The Indian tribal culture is egalitarian, democratic and eco-conscious."[20] The underlying philosophy that runs through the Mizo society is seen in the famous saying, "*sem sem dam dam ei bil thi thi*" ("Share, share and live or hoard, hoard and perish"[21]). According to K. Lallawmzuala sharing in Mizo culture is much more than sharing of material prosperity with the needy; it entails sharing of life and labor which is reflected in their generosity, hospitality, and kindness towards others. Mizo people believe that those who did not have the mind of sharing were not worthy to live long in the Mizo society[22] Therefore, they measured the riches of a person not in terms of how much a person has accumulated but in terms of how much he or she spent and shared with others. For Lallawmzuala, even the Mizo social ethics, *Tlawmngaihna* was rooted in this philosophy of sharing.[23] Tlawmngaihna never allows a person who is *tlawmngai* a piece of bread he or she had for his lunch, but gave it to his or her friends who were hungry.[24]

When we say the spirit of sharing, we do not mean that there were no poor people in Mizo society, but the concern for the community, especially the rich people, towards the poor was worth noting. The community centeredness of the Mizo society did not give any chance for individualism. Every member of the society was totally occupied by his or her duties towards the community. This social equity is possible only when and where people have deep concern for others. This egalitarian trait of Mizo society can be seen in almost all aspects of community life.

We have highlighted the three essential aspects of Mizo culture, *Zawlbuk*, the community home, the community ethics and the community philosophy. It is recognized that these socio-cultural elements are fundamental to keep the spirit of communitarianism alive.

3. MODERNIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON MIZO COMMUNITARIANISM

3.1. Westernization as Modernization

As already stated in the beginning, modernization of Mizo society has been caused by the forces that came from the West, British Administration, Christianization and globalization. Let us examine the impact of the process of modernization on Mizo communitarian life.

Impact of British Administration

The British annexed Lushai Hills and administered the Mizo from the last quarter of the nineteenth century till Indian independence in 1947. The British colonial government entered into the hill areas for taxes and merchandise. However, in the case of Mizoram, the purpose of the British government was to keep peace law and order in the region so that the people may stop head hunting and looting expeditions in British India.[25] The policy was to spend as little as possible on an administration that was not even paying for itself and not to interfere in the daily lives of the people as far as practicable.[26] However, despite a non interference approach of the British administrators, major cultural changes did take place. The government prohibited head-hunting and inter village war and imposed peace upon the Mizos. Hrangkhuma observed that British administration had a far reaching effect upon both religious and social life:

> In a tribal society, the entire life of a human being is completely integrated and therefore, demarcation between religious, social and economic is impossible. By imposing peace, the British have undermined the Mizo philosophy of life completely. Added to this is the subjection of the tribe to an external political authority for the first time in their history, and the introduction of an alien administrative and judicial system that significantly undermined the authority of the traditional chief who had never come under authority other than his own and imposed entirely new principles of authority and jurisprudence.[27]

In addition, they introduced a money-economy to replace barter and consumer items, established modern communications, a postal system, roads and new forms of transport connected village to village as never before. The British administration also imported a number of outsiders: administrators, clerks, soldiers, merchants, technicians, who introduced new life styles, particularly in the administrative centres.

The impact of British Administration, according to H.L. Malsawma, was the abolition of the Mizo social cultural symbol, *Zawlbuk.*[28] He states that as long as the chiefs succeeded to hold their powers over the people, the institution of Zawlbuk occupied the centrality in the community life. However, after the subjugation of the then Lushai Hills by the British in the later part of the nineteenth century, disintegrating forces began to operate to undermine the stability of the Zawlbuk.[29] As Mizo chiefs except Ropuiliani[30] and heroes were succumbed to the white supremacy, the villagers dared to challenge the power of their chiefs. Malsawma lamented that those who had been influenced by the Western culture, began to feel that the only way to improve their lot was to break away from their old ways of living and imitate the Westerners by embracing Christianity and copying their ways of life. For Malsawma, the outcome of all this was a fast erosion of the Zawlbuk life.[31] F.S. Downs, a Westerner, also comments, "British administration and its impact is a threat to the traditional way of life."[32] As the community home disappeared, it is difficult to argue that British Administration had strengthened Mizo communitarianism. However, as the villages were connected by road communications, their understanding of community was broadened and the community expanded from a village community to a larger Mizo community.

Impact of Christianity

Another force of modernization that had a tremendous impact on the Mizo society was Western Christianity. It was in 1894 on January 11, the two pioneer missionaries from the West, J.H. Lorrain and F.W. Savidge pitched their tent for the first time in Mizoram. There are a few scholars (not native) who claim that the purpose of the missionaries was to advance British rule, but almost all native scholars claim that the missionaries were sent by their love for God and the lost souls. S.P. Sinha says that missionaries were there not for advocating a faith but for keeping the British imperialism alive, and they were responsible for fanning the basic distrust and fear among hill people for the plains people.[33] Scholar like S.K. Chaube say that after 1813 the British policy was to spread Christianity and enlightenment in India. Chaube said, "After the smoothing of the surface by the administration, the church went to action and sowed the seeds of progress."[34]

There is a plethora of documents that record the miraculous works of God through the missionaries from the West. Hminga argued that Christian faith changed the village, the physical appearance, the social life, the customary practices and belief of Mizo society.[35] Hrangkhuma adds, "The gospel affected the basic foundation of Mizo culture at the cognitive, affective and evaluative levels. In particular, the Mizo traditional world view of power and causality, and the consequent behavioral patterns were changed."[36] P.L. Lianzuala interprets that Mizo community ethics, *Tlawmngaihna* finds its fulfilment in Jesus[37] and the Community home, *Zawlbuk*, according to Thanzauva, was replaced by the Church and educational institutions.[38] However, Thanzauva does not fail to recognize the need of recapturing the spirit of the *Zawlbuk* as well as *Tlawmngaihna* for the development of Mizo Christian theology. This implies that Christian teachings in the church are inadequate to transform the society.

The positive impacts of Christianity do not allow native scholars to recognize the negative side of the impact of Western Christianity.

It is also appropriate to make some critical observations about the Church and Christian Mission. First, the Church established by the Western missionaries openly challenged the Zawlbuk institution during the third revival.[39] The result of this attack was deterioration of the influence of Zawlbuk and it finally disappeared along with its patron- institution, chieftainship. The latter was abolished by an Act of the Government of Assam in 1954.[40] Second, the British administrators as well as missionaries described the tribals as head hunters, savages, uncivilized and anything that did not conform to Western values was considered as "devilish", paganistic, devoid of rational. This implies that they did not see any thing good and rationality in the native culture. If this is true, how can we say that Western Christianity strengthened Mizo culture or communitarianism? How can cultural despisers be considered as keepers of the Mizo culture? Third, the emergence of a Mizo church was counted as one of the remarkable impacts of the Gospel of Jesus. However, as missionaries planted the church in their likeness, the church becomes the agent of Westernization. Christianity, at first sight, was considered as the agent that contributes to tribal societies, a sense of solidarity. At the same, Christianity divides tribal communities on denominational lines. This means historical rivalries that were prevalent in the West were transferred to tribal societies. The joy of fellowship which they experienced in the community has been lost in the bickering, rivalries and misunderstanding among different denominations. In reaction to Western cultural hegemony in Mizo Christianity, we have seen a Mizo cultural revival called *Puma Zai*[41] in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In addition, even a revival in the church, according to Vanlalchhuanawma, is "a cultural response to westernization."[42] And there were some prominent indigenous leaders who protested against western type of Christianity and formed their own folks, like Tlira, Khuangtuaha, Zakaia, Rorelliana, Vanawia, etc. Fifth, individualism is a distinct feature of the Western civilization that emphasizes the centrality of human and the assertion of individual freedom as well as individual salvation. Even though the Christian doctrine of *koinonia* supports the tribal communitarian life, the doctrine of individual salvation has had a tremendous impact on Mizo society. It is difficult to measure to what extent the Christian teaching of individual salvation is responsible for the increasing individualism in the Mizo society.

Impact of Globalisation

One of the causes of modernization is globalization. Globalization is defined as "the transnationalisation of labour, *homogenization of culture,* globalization of production and standardization of consumer tastes."[43].

About the cultural aspect of globalization, Mr. George Cheriyan states

> The Western culture is trying to take over the eastern culture. The US culture is trying to take over the world culture. Homogenization not only wipes away diversity but it also states that all other cultures are not good. It is declared that the culture of the powerful is superior.[44]

In a similar vein, K.C. Abraham also points out that "Globalisation has become a vehicle of cultural invasion leading to a mono-culture that suppress economic, ecological and cultural diversity, and has a tendency to accept efficiency and productivity without concern for justice and compassion towards people." [45]

Electronic media has come up in a big way during the past about a decade. Satellite Television channels have unleashed a host of western programmes and serials, themes of which are alien to composite tribal society. The social moral and ethical values are also undergoing change, which has threatened the very composition of tribal society. One of the latest vehicles of modernization is Information Technology (IT). This Information Technology offers opportunities to educated tribal youths to taste midnight culture as BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) employees in metro-cities in India. It is interesting to note that the BPO employee is using a false identity, a pseudo name and accent. Young people are caught in the midnight zone between the traditional values of the community consciousness and the consumer market values of individualism and competition. Ghazi has rightly commented on the western influence on the tribes, "Western popular culture corroded the internal social structure and cohesion of many of the tribes."[46] It is beyond the scope of the paper to deal in detail with the impact of cultural globalization. What is to be considered now is, what is Mizo communitarianism in this new context of massive change? Can Mizo Communitarianim withstand the onslaughts of globalization? We can understand better the condition of Mizo communitarian principles by examining the major issues of Mizoram today as given below:

1. Debate on MLTP Act and Zawlaidi
2. Increase of Urban & Rural poverty and the disparity between rich and poor.
3. Fashion Market and Consumerism
4. Corruption, Drugs addiction, and HIV AIDS
5. Acquisition of land by the local elites.
6. Mushrooming of English medium schools

In this situation, it is difficult to argue that the Mizo traditional communitarian principles, Tlawmngaihna, and egalitarian philosophy, *Sem Sem dam dam ei bil thi thi* can withstand the Western cultural invasion. Recently, we have also seen the emergence of the Reform Movements, Moral Reform Movement and Zonunmawi Movement in spite of conducting frequent revival meetings in the Church. The objective of the two Reform Movements is to recapture the past Mizo principles which had been weakened and adulterated in the process of modernization. These Reform Movements may appropriately be considered as counter or Traditionalizing movements against the homogenizing global culture.

CONCLUSION

It is a fact that the traditional Mizo communitarianism is no longer an existing presence in the modern Mizo society. It has either been replaced or transformed by modernity. The modern mechanisms of progress, social change, and developmental programmes assisted by science and technology, have succeeded in transforming or replacing the traditional social institutions and practices. This study proves that in the process of modernization, the community is losing its centrality in tribal society.

NOTES

1. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 181-183.

2. Yogendra Singh, *Modernisation of Indian Tradition* (Delhi: Rawat Publications, 1999), 61.
3. See a detailed description of communitarianism in Thanzauva's book, *Theology of Community* (Aizawl: Mizoram Theological Conference, 1997), 136-145.
4. Lalpekhlua, *Contextual Christology: A Tribal perspective* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2007), 161.
5. C.S. Song, *Theology from the womb of Asia* (London: SCM Press, 1988), 123.
6. Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 69.
7. C.L. Hminga, "The Traditional Mizo concept of God," in *Towards A Tribal Theology: The Mizo Perspective*, edited by K. Thanzauva (Jorhat: Mizo Theological Conference, 1989), 48.
8. Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture* (Jorhat: Mizo Theological Conference, 1996), 59.
9. Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, 59.
10. K. Thanzauva, "Theology of Zawlbuk", in *Towards a Tribal Theology: From the Mizo Perspective* (Aizawl: Mizo Theological Conference, 1989), 99.
11. N. E. Parry, *A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies* (Aizawl: Tribal Research, 1976), 19.
12. J. Meirion Lloyd, *History of the Church in Mizoram* (Aizawl: Synod Publication Board, 1991), 4.
13. N. Chatterji, *Zawlbuk as a Social Institution in the Mizo Society* (Aizawl: Tribal Research Institute, 1975), 15. J.H. Lorrain, in his monumental *Dictionary of Lushai Language*, gives a comprehensive meaning of *Tlawmngaihna*, which is widely used by contemporary writers, parts of which are given below: 1. to be self-sacrificing, unselfish, self-denying, persevering, stoical, stout-hearted, plucky, brave, firm, and independent. 2. to put one's own inclinations on one side and do a thing which one would rather not do, with the object either of keeping up one's prestige, etc., or of helping another, or of not disappointing, etc. 3. to do whatever the occasion demands no matter how distasreful or inconvenience it may be to oneself or to one's own inclination. J.H. Lorrain, *Dictionary of the Lushai Language* (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, Reprinted, 1975), 513.
14. Hrangkhuma Fanai, "Mizoram Transformational Change: A Study of the Processes and Nature of Mizo Cultural change and Factors that contributed to the change" (Ph.D. Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1989), 61.
15. Chatterji, *Zawlbuk as a Social institution in the Mizo society*, 15.
16. Lalthuama, "Tlawmngaihna," *Thu leh Hla*, No. 4 (April 2000): 23.
17. Rokunga Memorial Committee, *Rokunga Hlate* (Aizawl: RMC, 2000), 9.

Aw Tlawmngaihna hlu, aw nunna par
(Chorus) Kan tlang ram nuam hmun sangah hian,
Kum sang tam tak pawh ral mah se,
Zamual liam lovin ding reng rawh

Even though the song has four stanzas, the gist is found in its Chorus. The literal translation of the chorus may go like this: O precious Tlawmngaihna, O blooming life; Even many thousand years hence; Find a resounding echo; In our dwelling pleasant lofty mountains.

18. Laltluangliana Khiangte, *Mizos of North East India: An Introduction to Mizo Culture, Folklore, Language & Literature* (Aizawl: L.T.L. Publications, 2008), 22.
19. H.L. Malsawma, *Sociology of the Mizos*, 64-65.
20. K.P. Aleaz, "A Tribal Christian Theology from India", *Journal of Tribal Studies* VII/2 (July-December 2003): 290-305.
21. Vanlalchhuanawma, "Revival Movement and Mizo Society", in *Ground Works for Tribal Theology in the Mizo Context*, edited by Rosiamliana Tochhawng, K. Lalrinmawia and L.H. Rawsea (Delhi: ISPCK, 2007), 84.
22. K. Lallawmzuala, "Sem sem dam dam, ei bil thi thi" in *Hmatiang Sawnin*, edited by Lalrinawmi Ralte (Bangalore: Bangalore Mizo Association, 2001), 286-287.
23. Lallawmzuala, "Sem sem dam dam, ei bil thi thi", 287.
24. LH. Lalpekhlua, *Contextual Christology*, 234.
25. John Vanlal Hluna. *Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram* (Aizawl: Mizoram History Association, 1985), 9; see also Hrangkhuma, "The Mizos: A People Transformed by the Gospel", in *Ground works for Tribal Theology in the Mizo context*, edited by Rosiamliana Tochhawng, K. Lalrinmawia and L.H. Rawsea (Delhi: ISPCK, 2007), 4.
26. Walter Fernandes, Gita Bharali and Vemedo Kezo, *The UN Indigenous Decade in Northeast India* (Guwahati: North Eastern Social Research Centre, 2008), 29.
27. Hrangkhuma, "The Mizos: A People Transformed by the Gospel", 4.
28. H.L. Malsawma, *Sociology of the Mizo* (Gauhati: Spectrum Publication, 2002), 61
29. Ibid.
30. Ropuiliani was the Mizo chief who was famous for her patriotism and courage; in particular her dealing with the British rulers is worth considering. She dared to resist the British imperialism and never had a mind to surrender to the foreign rulers. The details about this chief can be seen from Lalsangzuali, *Tlawm ve lo Lalnu* Ropuiliani (Aizawl: Hnamte Press, 2000).
31. Malsawma, *Sociology of the Mizo*, 61.

32. F.S. Downs, *Christianity in North East India* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1983), 14 &15.
33. Quoted in Hrangkhuma, "The Mizos: A People Transformed by the Gospel,", 7.
34. Ibid.
35. C.L. Hminga, *The Life and Witnesses of the Churches in Mizoram* (Serkawn: The Literature Committee, Baptist Church of Mizoram, 1987).
36. Ibid.
37. P.L. Lianzuala, "Tlawmngaihna," in *Towards a Tribal Theology*, 62.
38. K. Thanzauva, "Theology of Zawlbuk", in *Toward a Tribal Theology*, 108f.
39. Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, 179.
40. L.B. Thanga, *The Mizos: A Study in Racial Personality* (Gauhati: United Publishers, 1978), 14.
41. Puma Zai is a song that praises the traditional 'God. See K. Zawla, *Mizo Pipute leh An thlahte Chanchin* (Aizawl: Hmar Arsi Press, 1974), 315.
42. Vanlalchhuanawma, "Professorial Lecture on Soci-Missionlogical Significance of Revival in Mizoram", Presented at Aizawl Theological College on September 5, 2007.
43. Raju I, John Mohan, "Towards an Understanding of the Phenomenon of Globalisation: An Attempt" in *Globalisation: Marginalisation of Dalits, Women and Tribals*, edited by Rosemary (Tumkur: Viswanath for Solidarity, 1988), 1. And Italics mine.
44. George Cheriyan, "A Response to Dr. Max L. Stackhouse's Paper on Globalisation," in *Dialogue on Globalisation*, edited by Mohan Raju and P. Moses Paul Peter (Bangalore: SCMI, 2000), 75.
45. K.C. Abraham, *Liberative Solidarity: Contemporary Perspectives on Mission* (Tiruvalla: Christava Sahitya Samithi, 1996), 147.
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Jayanta Sarkar

Modernization: Challenges and Impact on Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh

When we discuss the issue of modernization, its challenges and impact on the tribal societies of North-East India, we have to raise the question: Why is modernization considered a challenge to the tribes of the North-East India?

We may consider three probable explanations:

(1) It may be because modernization has the potential to exert a lot of pressure of the progressive ideas and technologies on the way of life of these geographically and culturally almost secluded tribes. Therefore, it becomes a challenge to them to find out some social and cultural mechanisms that have enough strength to minimize the intensity of such induced pressures on their culture.

(2) In absence of such mechanisms, modernization may push these tribes to a stage of social and cultural disintegration. Preventing their societies from such an undesired situation is no doubt a challenge for them.

(3) There may be a third reason. Modernization may force these inhabitants into a critical situation of mental disturbance and generate conflicts between modernity and their age-old traditions. Evolving a compromising attitude within the old and the new generations in order to minimize such conflicts and tensions is definitely a challenge to these tribes.

It appears that these three probable explanations may effectively address the issue of challenges. With this assumption, I propose to examine the processes of modernization and its impact on the traditional mindset of a few tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, the largest state of North-East India that has a geographical area of 83743 sq.km. The diverse hill terrains of this state are the home land of 26 major tribes and more than 100 sub-tribes. The total population inhabiting in the 16 districts of this hill state is 13,82,611 with a density of 17 people per sq.km.(Census 2011). The scheduled tribe population as per 2001 Census was 64.22 per cent.

Before we actually examine the processes of modernization, let us look at what we generally understand by the term 'modernization'.

Modernization: By modernization, we broadly mean a progressive overall change in the way of life of a society that aims at achieving a 'better' way of life of the concerned people. It need not require a special mention that 'change' is inevitable in a society. But that does not necessarily mean that all the societies are changing through the processes of 'modernization'. We can consider what the concept of 'modernization' means in the social sciences.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, "modernization is the current term for an old process—the process of social change where by less developed societies acquire characteristics common to more developed societies"(Lerner1968). "Modernization, therefore, is the process of social change in which development is the economic component". Improvement in the economic standards of the people is generally considered to be due to modernization.

However, it cannot be denied that there are many other non-economic factors that also work as the agents of modernization. There are factors like:

1. Development of infrastructure and communications.
2. Educational development of the people.
3. Urbanization.
4. Development of markets for exchange of goods and services in place of traditional ways of meeting such needs.

I have indicated at the very beginning of this paper that the concept of 'modernization' is generally viewed against what is considered as 'tradition'. 'Modernity' is viewed as opposed to 'tradition' and, therefore, it is assumed that the processes of modernization either keep aside or discard all or part of the customs, beliefs, norms, thoughts, values and even traditions.

Modernization at the cost of all the 'traditions' may not necessarily be always applicable specially in the case of the tribes who have been living in close contact with their natural surroundings for resources for centuries.

People of North-East India in general have by and large retained close and intimate relations with the natural environment. To a great extent, they still depend on the available natural resources for their existence. They followed the 'traditional' mode of livelihood.

BEGINNING OF MODERNIZATION

Like other parts of India the process of modernization in North-East India began with the coming of British rulers in this region. The intensity of such a process, however, was almost negligible in comparison with that of other parts of this country. This is primarily because the colonial rulers did not intend to interfere in the way of life of these almost secluded people in order to avoid any uprising or serious conflict.

BRITISH RULE IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

The British annexed the whole of Assam in 1838 and made it a Non-Regulation Province of the British Empire in India. Before the advent of the British, unrestricted interaction existed between the tribal populations in the mountains and the plains people of the valley of the Brahmaputra.

In 1873, the "Inner Line Regulation Act" came into existence in this region. According to this act, any British subject of certain classes and foreign residents were not allowed to enter into this region. This regulation also stipulated rules regarding trade, possession of land beyond the line, and other related matters. However, the British allowed the Christian missionaries to work among the people of the hills to initiate the process of induced change, and stimulate the process of modernization. But, the Administration restricted the entry of the Christian missionaries in the then NEFA, now Arunachal Pradesh. An Act in this respect was later on promulgated by the Arunachal Administration in 1977.

Against this historical background I shall limit my discussion to two important agencies of modernization, namely, (1) Development of infrastructure, and (2) Spread of education that has brought remarkable changes in the life of the tribes. Passing references will, however, be made on other related agencies identified at the beginning of this paper.

INFRASTRUCTURE IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH DURING THE BRITISH RULE

A look into the achievements of the agencies that worked for overall progress towards modernization in Arunachal Pradesh till the British had relinquished power in August 1947 would indicate the least interest of the colonial rulers in this respect. Table 1 shows negligible infrastructure development (Chowdhury 1982:249-250).

Table 1: Infrastructure in NEFA till August 1947.

Infrastructure	Location	Quantity
Road	In the plains	168km
Hospitals/Dispensaries/ Leper Colonies	On the fringe of the hills	13
Schools Lower Primary	At the Foot Hills	2

Let me now refer to the status of infrastructure in this State from 1960 to 2010. Information available in a report of the government of Arunachal Pradesh indicates a spectacular progress in the development of infrastructure in spite of the constraints due to inaccessible geographical areas.

COMMUNICATION

We have an idea about the progress achieved in the sphere of surface communication from the Arunachal Pradesh Human Resource Development Report 2005 as indicated in the table below:

Table 2: Development of Road Transport in Arunachal Pradesh: 1960-61 to 2000-2001

Year	Road Length (in km)
1960-61	505.54
1965-66	1,486.93
1970-71	2,315.13
1975-76	3,100.76
1980-81	3,572.42
1985-86	5,362.36
1990-91	8,344.77
1994-95	11,037.88
2000-2001	15,091.32

(Arunachal Pradesh HDR 2005:251 www.planningcommission.gov.in).

As per this report the existing road net work has touched the figure of 15,091.32km, though a large area still remains unconnected by road. Considering the topography of the State that has almost 96 per cent hill areas the progress is very encouraging. Construction of roads in Arunachal Pradesh is a very hard task because of the nature of the terrain. The hills are high and steep and rivers are turbulent and difficult to negotiate. In spite of these difficulties more than 6000 km of motorable roads and more than 4000 km of porter track, bridle path etc. have been constructed. This figure is definitely encouraging in comparison to 168 km motorable roads in 1947. In road construction the local people play a vital role. They have now learnt the method of road building, and most of the roads are built by tribal labour. These roads and bridle paths now help in transporting goods. Today, isolation is a thing of the past and the people are learning about each other more and more. Every major centre of population is now connected by regular transport services. The problem of carriage of supplies of the post-independence period has been solved by this network of motorable roads.

Besides road communication, air transport also has an important role to play, particularly in the areas where road communication has not yet reached. To facilitate air transport a number of air strips have been constructed. Regular helicopter service has also been introduced of late. A 12 km railway line has been constructed from Balipara to Bhalukpong. Some other projects for extension of rail communications are in the offing.

IMPACT OF ROAD COMMUNICATION

Impact of modernization on the traditional subsistence and shifting agriculturalists living in steep mountainous region, however has generated many undesirable consequences. Traditional systems have an inbuilt strength that is normally difficult to find in modern methods. The age-old practice of shifting cultivation has a strong base of traditional knowledge that teaches the members of a society how to work and live maintaining harmony with the surrounding environment. The processes of modernization have disturbed the traditional way of living in harmony with nature.

Expansion of communication of roads, both all weather and fair weather, construction of bridges both concrete and suspension, have direct and impact on the indigenous engineering skill of the tribes of this State. I shall give two such instances.

CANE SUSPENSION BRIDGE

Indigenous suspension bridges over the rivers in the steep hilly regions of many parts of Arunachal Pradesh were the only means of communication for centuries. In the districts like Kameng, Upper Subansiri and Upper Siang, the people used to cross the rivers on bridges made from indigenous materials, mainly cane and bamboo. These bridges were made with extraordinary skill with the help of simple indigenous technology.

The specific type of cane suspension bridges used for communication between two sides of a river display extraordinary engineering skill and these are glaring examples of technological know-how of the tribes like the Adis, Tagins and the Mishmis living in the high hills. For the construction of any bridge on a river we know that engineers would first examine the site in order to ascertain load bearing capacity of the soil. The engineers would also prefer to have a site with minimum breadth so as to minimize length of the bridge for its durability. The tribes of Arunachal Pradesh while constructing a cane hanging bridge also follow the same procedures. They select a narrow place where the soil is firm with a number of boulders. The place should have trees with strong trunks so that when both sides of the suspension bridge are tied with the selected trees, they may sustain the load and also remain usable for a longer period. A particular species of cane is selected. The canes are joined with great skill and perfection. Around these long canes, tied with the trunk of the trees of the two banks of the river, a number of cane rings are fixed in order to increase the strength of the bridge. The rings are fixed in such a way so that the bridge can sustain the load of a number of persons on it at a time. The joints of the cane rings are also of special nature that requires special knowledge. This technical know-how is handed down from generation to generation. The skilled persons in the village do not take much time to construct such a hanging bridge. Some times even within a couple of days they can install such a unique bridge depending on its length. A suspension bridge may be a thousand feet or even more at certain places depending on the width of the river.

Nowadays, as a part of the programme of improving communication through infrastructure development at many places such suspension cane bridges are being replaced by concrete bridges. At some places cane and bamboo of the traditional suspension bridges are replaced by steel wires provided by the government. The experts in construction of a traditional cane suspension bridge are not acquainted with the new techniques, and, therefore, they are unable to take part in the construction of modern suspension bridges. This is likely to cause the loss of their expertise and skill and also the indigenous knowledge of the local tribes about the properties of many natural resources used in preparing suspension bridges of traditional type. Such bridges remain now as the symbol of community pride and self respect that displays togetherness of a community. Replacement of traditional suspension bridges may thus, loosen the community pride.

Increase road network has also facilitated induction of new technology and machines from outside. Such machines have already eradicated appreciable traditional innovative knowledge of the Khamtis of Lohit district.

HUSKING MACHINE

Water current of rivers are now-a-days used for generating hydraulic power with the help of modern technology. In order to instal a turbine the engineers, at the first instance, mechanically ascertain the power of the water current that is naturally produced due to sudden fall of water from a height suitable to operate the turbine at a desired speed required for generating electric power. The Khamtis of Arunachal Pradesh acted on the same principle, in the past, while setting their husking machine along the bank of river. They are well known in the northeastern region for their wet rice cultivation in the foothills: a tradition that they had brought from the Irravati valley of Myanmar. As in the case of other tribal populations of the region, paddy is husked daily by the women folk in their houses. In order to have a large scale husking at a time, the ancestors of the Khamtis had invented a unique device in which they intelligently utilized power of river water currents available near the villages. Incidentally most of the Khamti villages in foot hills of Lohit district are located on the banks of rivers where fertile lands are available. The wooden machine they invented, known as *kookjhak,* is an example of their wonderful innovative mind, intelligence and power of intimate observation of the behaviour of the river and its water current. The rivers coming down from the mountains flow here at great velocity. The current is not uniform every where due the undulating nature of the terrain. The wooden *kookjhak* has two parts. One part consists of wooden planks of a required shape and size, fixed in a specific direction making a wheel shaped structure. This part of the machine is placed under water so that the water current can rotate the wheel uninterrupted. A long wooden axis is fixed at the centre of the wheel. The other end of the axis has more than one lever fixed in it for husking. The wooden machine is installed in a place on the riverbank where the water current remains almost uniform throughout the day. The current should not be very strong or very weak. The velocity of the current in such case is ascertained not mechanically; instead the human factor is involved here. Experience and traditional knowledge are the two factors that work behind it. The uniform flow of water current facilitates rotation of the wheel immersed in the water, which in turn operates the levers in a controlled manner. The tribe can thus husk a large quantity of paddy utilizing water current without much physical labour. The *kookjhak* and its mode of installation prove beyond doubt the intelligence of the ancestors of the Khamtis and continuation of such scientific knowledge in their society through the ages.

When the fuel operated husking machine were brought into Chowkham and its adjoining areas in the late sixties, the wonderful *kookjhak* lost its significance in the Khamti society. As a result the indigenous knowledge regarding behaviour of river and its water current also gradually faded out.

FORMAL EDUCATION

I have pointed out that formal education is one of the powerful agencies that help modernizing the mindset of a group of people. Education has the potential to widen the views and prepare the social atmosphere for acceptance of many new traits for the betterment of a society. Achievement in the spread of education in Arunachal Pradesh, which plays a very important role in stimulating the process of modernization, is more encouraging. The following table shows the spread of educational institutions of different categories during 1960 -2001.

Table 3: Growth of Educational Institutions during 1960-2001

Year	No. of Pre-Primary & Primary School	No. of Middle School	No. of Secondary School	No. of Higher Secondary School	No. of College
1960-61	169	22	05	–	Nil
1970-71	503	47	09	07	01
1980-81	944	119	25	13	02
1990-91	1,371	254	68	46	04
2000-2001	1,360	333	116	68	07

(Arunachal Pradesh Human Development Report—2005. Source: Directorate of Economic & Statistics, Government of Arunachal Pradesh).

Nowadays, there is a University, and two institutes for technical education.

We may now have an idea about the rate of literacy that has gradually increased during last five decades.

Table 4: Literacy rate (%) in Arunachal Pradesh during 1961-2011**.

Year	Person	Male	Female
1961	7.13	12.5	1.42
1971	11.29	17.82	3.71
1981	25.55	35.12	14.02
1991	41.59	51.45	29.69
2001	54.74	63.83	43.58
***2011	66.95	73.7	59.6

**(Arunachal Pradesh HRD-2005).

***(Census of India. Provisional Report 2011 www.planningcommission.gov.in)

The foregoing accounts on steady increase in the number of educational institutions in at levels beyond the urban centres have affected both boys and girls. The literacy rates of 12.5% and 1.42% in case of male and female respectively, during 1961 have touched 73.7% and 59.6% in 2011. This is no mean achievement considering the difficult geographical areas where the students inhabit. The increase in communication and educational facilities has opened a scope to them for going out of their State for higher education in the Universities and Technical Colleges. The youth of both the sexes have been going to Dibrugarh, Gouhati, Shillong, Delhi and other cities for higher education.

Unlike other States of the North-East India where Christian missionaries undertook a pioneering role in spreading education, the NEFA administration first, and then, Arunachal government took effective steps in spreading education since Independence in many remote and almost inaccessible terrain of the State.

Opening of the improved surface communication has increased the mobility of people of hitherto remote areas to the nearby urban center markets. Many youth of Arunachal are adopting attractive modern consumer goods. The youth who are studying in educational institutions out side Arunachal have been interacting with people of other societies and cultures. As a result, through the processes of acculturation, they imbibe many modern ideas that widen their world view.

My brief narration establishes beyond any doubt that the inhabitants of entire Arunachal Pradesh have been experiencing visible positive results of the processes of modernization.

Having said this, I now come back to the question initially raised viz., 'what kind of challenge have the apparent beneficiaries of this hill State been facing'?

UNDESIRABLE CONSEQUENCES

As it happens in case of all kinds of induced changes, the processes of modernization in Arunachal Pradesh also have generated some undesirable consequences in the traditional societies. We may refer to a few cases.

CONCERNS OF ADVERSE IMPACT

Commenting upon the impact of modernization on the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, Pertin (1983:7-12), an Adi scholar wrote:

"... the development of communication is a curse as well as blessing. In some places, it is fast becoming the means of corruption and exploitation of peace-loving innocent local people that leads to our moral degradation and cultural decadence. The trade and commercial penetration in the tribal belts is seen threatening to ruin our traditional folk-crafts on the one hand, and the draining of our wealth on the other that we have now on the other. This has ruined equally our indigenous hand-loom industry by the motive of deliberate imports and demand for cheap bazaar cloths that bring vulgar and inferior goods to the very door of our people"... He continued to write "...in some areas our local expert weavers are dying out in the face of market competition as there are no more demands for our exquisite indigenous products."

Apprehending adverse effects of rapid modernization, Pertin further stated:

"When we want to be respectable modern men by putting on latest fashionable designs, we become afraid of our originality and its aesthetic beauty. But modernity and respect are not a matter of time, nor a mere change of one's dress, but of good outlook. Then, are we to, or should we, necessarily become the mirror to reflect other's dress tradition? ...If we fail to uphold our distinct fundamental identity, soon we will be heading for a disaster."

On the issue of impact of formal education Pertin remarked "The spread of education, though it undoubtedly brought a sweeping socio-political advance and intellectual renaissance, has equally endangered the very existence of some of our noble traditional institutions. ... The theoretical educated group of people of whom some are devoid of practical knowledge and proper erudition, borrow and imitate others' culture, habits and outlook at random and bring a total, cultural penetration from outside leading to deculturisation of our society which is destructive to our society. This is a great menace of a very serious order to the dignity of our moral value"(ibid).

Besides this local scholar, similar concern was expressed by the scholars who have worked among the tribes of this beautiful State.

On the invitation of the government of Arunachal Pradesh the anthroplogist F. Haimendorf revisited Apatani plateau in Lower Subansiri and also some parts of Kameng districts in 1980. His main objective was to assess the progress of development that occurred during the two years since his last visit in 1978.

After the tour in a letter to the then Chief Secretary, Sri I.P.Gupta, Haimendorf had appreciated the remarkable achievement in formal education among the Apatanis. But in the same breath he remarked "...there are other features of the educational system which may well cause concern. The most acute problem is in my opinion the increase in the number of semi-educated boys and young men who have dropped out of school after the seventh, eighth, ninth class, have not obtained any proper employment, but seem to be nevertheless unwilling to return to agricultural work, even though their families may own and cultivate land. ... The existence of such a growing body of unemployed boys and young men alienated from the traditional Apatani style of life seems to be fraught with danger. Already the residents and shop-keepers of Hapoli have complained about the increase of petty crimes, such as thefts and minor burglaries, and I noticed that in the villages the Apatanis now secure their granaries with padlocks where as only a few years ago property was normally safe even without such precautions" (Haimendorf 1980:1-5).

Like Haimendorf, I also observed the process of alienation of the educated youth from their agricultural activities among the Wanchos of Longding and Ponchau area during my revisit to these places in 2000. Earlier, while undertaking anthropological fieldwork I observed that among the Wanchos of Pongchau and Bonia villages in early 1976, participation of the youth not only in the agricultural activities but also in other spheres like extending services for the construction of houses of village members was a customary norm. Literacy among the Wanchos was almost negligible till a few years back. Literacy rate of this tribe who had a tradition of head-hunting was 23.14% according to the Census of 2001. The literacy rates were as low as 6.3% and 12.89% in 1981 and 1991 respectively. Both government and non-governmental organizations are involved in the field of education and literacy. There has been considerable development in the field of literacy and education which has led to the establishment of 63 schools in Wancho area according to the 2001-2002 report provided by the Education Department of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh. Out of these 63 schools, 49 are primary schools, 2 higher secondary schools, 3 secondary schools, and 8 middle schools. As a result, at present it is common to find both boys and girls studying in schools and colleges. The Pongchau circle is considered to be one of the remote corners of the Tirap district touching the Myanmar border.

In 1999 Longding and Pongchau circles together had 49 primary schools, 4 middle schools, one each secondary and higher secondary schools. The number of tribal students was as high as 1,423 for boys and 606 for the girls for primary to higher secondary schools (Handbook of Block Level Statistics of Tirap district).

In 1976 during my earlier visit to these areas it was not at all possible to communicate with the villagers in any language, other than their mother tongue—whether young or old. After a gap of about 25 years when I revisited Pongchau and Longding in 2000 I was surprised to see that almost all the young, irrespective of sex, were comfortable in speaking Assamese and Hindi. The Wancho students of Longding higher secondary school even could communicate in English to a certain extent. The progress is largely attributed to the work of Christian missionaries in the Wancho area though the direct activities of Christian missionaries are not allowed within Arunachal Pradesh since decades. In fact this State is the first to promulgate the *Anti-conversion bill* in 2003.

The educational institutions in Arunachal Pradesh, as has already been mentioned, are established and run by the State government.

Spread of education has significantly altered the life style of the Christian youth and it appears that all these are not appreciated by the members of the older generations. I shall reproduce a few lines from one of my earlier papers in this context.

"An old man of Pongchau village expressed his disillusionment with the spread of education. Once he told me that he had sent his son to the school initially at Pongchau and then to Longding with a lot of high hopes. But throughout his student life the boy did not extend any assistance to his father or to his family members in the activities related to the *jhum* cultivation. The old man had to spend quite a lot of money on him out of his subsistence economy. Now, the boy passed the higher secondary examination and has returned to Pongchau as unemployed youth. On probing, the man further stated that like his son many educated boys in the village are unemployed and suffering from depression. They are neither in a position to join in their family members in the day to day activities nor able to fulfill their aspirations through obtaining some employment. This is a very critical situation that has emerged because of the spread of education within a very sort time span" (Sarkar2005:173-184).

Concern about the adverse effects of fast transition due to modernization ventilated by Pertin in 1982 still continues among the eminent personalities of Arunachal Pradesh.

In a conference held at Bellagio in Italy on October 17-24, 2002 Mukut Mithi, then Chief Minister of the state delivered a speech on *"Tribals: The Salt of the Earth, A perspective of Tribal Transition in Arunachal Pradesh"*. I would like to mention a few remarks from his paper relevant to the issues of modernization.

Referring to the event of holding of beauty contests and fashion shows, or bringing in modernity in folk songs and dances, or construction of a large number of multi-storied concrete buildings ignoring the local architectural designs or use of school uniforms of non- traditional types, he remarked:

"I am not against these innovations...but these, if not guided properly, may replace our traditional designs of garments and original characters of folk dances and songs by some 'hybrid' forms... And if it happens, nothing could be more disastrous to the policy of allowing tribesmen to grow according to their own genius and tradition."

Mithi further remarked:

"Along with many others, I do feel, especially as a tribal by birth, that in spite of the great benefits brought by modernity, it is not free of its negative aspects. The worst impact of the so-called modern advancement has been in the sphere of our religious beliefs. They are considered inferior and expected to be changed in conformity with the western beliefs."

Emergence of conflict within certain sections of people consequent to modernization did not escape Mithi's notice. On this issue he remarked

"People always used resources to meet their needs and lived in harmony with the nature. But there coexists another group of tribal people who are already introduced to the ways of modern acquisitive society and such people tend to exploit resources not merely to meet their needs but also to acquire wealth often to the detriment of nature. This has given rise to a conflict of interests at two levels, between the said two groups of indigenous society and between society as a whole and the law enforcing authority. This inhomogeneous transition is a major challenge before us.

"How to fill the gap between a tribal who has converted to the values of the modern progressism and organized faiths on the one hand and the one who is a traditionalist and richer in cultural values on the other? This is a question that we need to answer."

However, as a key personality responsible for initiating policies for introducing processes of modernization on the one hand and initiating mechanisms to restrict their adverse effects on the culture of the people on the other hand, Mithi was hopeful to see transformation in a positive direction. Towards the end of his deliberation he said:

"Our society is changing and almost in every direction. The transition has been uneven from sector to sector, from area to area and from tribal group to tribal group. Some aspects have been altered irretrievably. Others have now begun to face the pressure. It is rather too early to determine whether the change in our society is an unmixed blessing. However, I do think Arunachalis have by and large welcomed the transition"(Mithi 2002).

I have quoted Pertin and Mithi at length as these statements reflect emerging processes of conflicts between the 'tradition' and 'modernity' of the local people of Arunachal Pradesh.

THE CHALLENGE

I have mentioned earlier about Pertin's apprehension of possible 'moral degradation' and 'cultural decadence' of the Adis as the outcome of modernization. Mithi to some extent has expressed similar concerns. Many subscribers of such view, however, realize that the processes of development and modernization would not help society to prosper in the fast changing situation. Uncontrolled involvement in modernization processes may lead to the disintegration of society. Therefore, in order to find out a via media, the educated students took initiatives in reviving some of their traditional customs and norms along with the modern ways of life. In this venture, a number of organizations have been set up. One of the important objectives of such organizations remains—'to take steps for revival of traditional culture, a marker of their ethnic identity'.

Immediately after Independence in 1947 a union called "Adi Mishing Students Union" was established at Pasighat. In 1971 the Adis established "District Social Welfare and Cultural Society of Siang District" at the district headquarters Along, with the objective of taking steps towards protecting their glorious cultural identity from the adverse effects on the Adi culture" (Sarkar 1982:234-235). Subsequently NEFA Students' Union was established which was renamed as "All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union"(AAPSU) in 1972. The Union has similar objectives. The preamble of the constitution of this Association declares that "The objective of the AAPSU is to promote unity and fraternity among the students in particular and the people of the State in general, to preserve and promote the tradition and culture of the people of Arunachal Pradesh".

Bhagabati (2004:185-186) in an article while examining the impact of 'modern influences on the Tangsa tribes of the Changlang district, mainly in the post independence period' stated: "Conscious attempts at forging a wider identity covering the different tribal segments appear to be closely linked up with the process of modernization"....the educated tribal youths in Arunachal Pradesh do not tend to opt or contract out of their respective cultural milieus as a consequence of modernization". The situation is quite different from a simple shift from tradition to modernity such as we normally envisage in a typical situation of acculturation. Instead, the youth here displayed a conscious commitment to their culture. Further, it is the youths who set the goal of wider identity orientation. They seem to be remarkably able to carry the older section with them since they themselves remain fully committed to the core values of their culture"(ibid).

Conscious commitments of the youth to their culture taking the people of the old generation who are fully committed to core values of their culture, is however, not discernible everywhere. In a different context in the Tirap district it was observed that the youth of the Wanchos are eager to discard certain core values of their culture.

Modernization through education, accelerated by spread of Christianity, has considerably changed the age-old values of the Wanchos. This tribe had the tradition of head-hunting till the mid of the twentieth century. The practice of head-hunting used to confer on the head hunters honour, respect, recognition and a very high position in the society for the act of their bravery. The act of head-hunting, though abandoned long back, is still remembered by the people of old generations with honour and pride. But nowadays, it has been generating mental conflicts among the present converted Christians who are told to view such acts as nothing but crime and sin (Sarkar 2005: 173-184).

SUMMING UP

In my present exercise, I have attempted an appraisal of the factors, like development of communication and spread of education, as the elements of modernization among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Unlike other hill states of the North-Eastern region where the spread of Christianity played a very effective role towards modernizing the way of life of the tribes through large scale acceptance of modern education, in case of Arunachal Pradesh it is the successive administrations that took a most vital initiative in accelerating the pace of modernization.

The three tentative assumptions explain why modernization is a challenge to the tribes of northeast India in general, and Arunachal Pradesh in particular. In course of our discussion, it is observed that these tribes that by and large preferred to opt for modern technology and accommodate the same without any serious conflicts with their tradition. Though, in some cases, such acceptance has erased their extraordinary traditional technological skill and power of observation regarding the nature and behaviour of surrounding ecology.

The youth organizations have played an effective role in generating counter-processes of modernization and helped retaining some of the traits of their traditional cultures. They are also in search of finding some ways to negotiate the emerging conflicts between tradition and modernity, between the old and the new generation.

It is worth mentioning that unlike other hill states of this region, in Arunachal Pradesh Christian missionaries have practically a very insignificant role to facilitate the spread of modernization. In fact, their direct activities within Arunachal Pradesh are debarred by the State laws.

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BOOK REVIEW

Nirmalya Guha

Sukharanjan Saha: *Fusion Epistemology*,

Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 2009,
pp. xi + 142, ₹300

The book under consideration has eight chapters. The contents of all the chapters are epistemological. They discuss both Indian and western epistemological theories. There is no thematic thread that runs through all the chapters. Therefore I would like to take up each and every chapter separately and review it.

CHAPTER 1: INTERPRETING *PRĀMĀṆYA* THEORIES IN THE LIGHT OF WESTERN EPISTEMOLOGY

This chapter seems to presuppose that knowledge is to be defined in terms of belief-hood, truth, justification and a fourth condition that would take care of Gettier like cases. Its main concern is knowledge as a justified true belief. The fourth condition will be taken up later. Saha, the author of the book under consideration, wants to show that the *pramā* (valid cognition) of Indian Epistemology, especially of Nyāya, is a close equivalent of 'knowledge'. According to him, *pramā* can be somehow understood as a *jñāna* (cognition) that is true *(satya/avyabhicarita)* and is generated in a proper way (*guṇa-janya*). He wants to see *jñāna* as a close equivalent of 'belief, and the property of being generated by an epistemologically correct factor *(guṇa)* is a close equivalent of 'justification'. Here two questions arise: can *jñāna* be a close equivalent of 'belief? Can the proper generation of a (piece of) cognition be a close equivalent of 'justification'? I would like to address the first question here. Saha himself mentions many times that a doubt or *samsaya* too is a *jñāna* in the Indian understanding. He, at many places, in fact in all the following chapters, has translated '*jñāna*' as 'cognition' or 'awareness'. It implies that his natural tendency is to equate *jñāna* with cognition, not with 'belief. In that case, I doubt whether the *jñāna*-belief equation is philosophically significant at all. I shall take up the second question in one of the following subsections.

The chapter covers the Indian counterparts of three broad areas of western epistemology, namely (I) Analysis of knowing, (II) Theories of justification, and (III) Knowledge of knowledge. Let us discuss each and every area.

(I) In the section on 'Analysis of knowing', Saha discusses the Indian counterparts of Gettier like examples. Here are a few cases. (A) Śrīharṣa's example: One closes one's palm and asks a gambler, 'how many dice do I have in my palm?' The gambler says 'five' and five it is. This is a lucky guess. (B) This example is cited by Praśastapāda, the author of *Praśastapāda-bhāṣyam.* One takes steam for smoke and infers, 'this hill has fire, since it has got smoke'. And really there are both smoke and fire on that hill. Thus one's inference arrives at a right conclusion in a wrong way. According to Praśastapāda, this defective inference is *tad-bhāvāsiddha.* (C) Gaṅgeśa talks about a 'deluded deceiver'[1], a *bhrānta pratāraka,* who thinks that x is p while it is not the case that x is p. He tells somebody, say S, that x is not p since he wanted to lie to S. S comes to believe that x is not p. S's belief is accidentally true. (D) Gaṅgeśa gives an example in which S hears a talking bird say that p and starts believing that p is the case. p is indeed the case. Does S know that p?

Saha discusses these examples since he thinks that these will help one understand the issues related with justification and knowledge of knowledge. In fact, they are important as far as a general definition of valid cognition or *pramā* is concerned.

(II) In the section on 'Theories of justification', Saha wants to equate the western theory of justification with the Indian theory of the origin of epistemic validity. A lucky guess is not justified. But a cognition based on some ground is justified. For example, if S is reliable and knows things as they are, then it is justified to believe in what S says. Western internalists believe that what makes true belief justified is a piece of belief, that which is internal to the epistemic system of the subject. And western externalists believe that some causal processes generate justified beliefs while some others cannot guarantee justification. On the contrary, the Indian theories about the origin of epistemic validity are divided into two camps. The internalist camp (*svatah-prāmāṇya-vada*) claims that the validity V of the cognition C is generated by the causes and conditions that generate C. The externalist camp (*paratah-prāmāṇya-vada*) claims that V is not generated by the causes and conditions of C, but by some other extraneous factor.

The Mimamsaka-Advaitin will support the first theory while the Naiyāyika will support the second. Saha has discussed the Indian externalist theory of the origin of validity as presented by Gaṅgeśa. The theory can be roughly presented in the following way. In the case of a perceptual cognition 'x is p', the validity is generated by the object x that really has the property of being p. In the case of an inferential cognition, 'x has y, since x has z', the validity is generated by the knowledge of the Reason (hetu) that is really pervaded by the Target (sadhya)[2] The factors that generate the validity of the cognition C are called *guṇas* or epistemic merits. And correspondingly the factors that generate the invalidity of C are called *dosas* or demerits. A jaundiced eye is the epistemic demerit that generates the invalidity of the cognition, 'this conch is yellow'. Thus, Saha seems to say that the cognition caused by a *guṇa* is justified, and the one caused by a *dosa* is unjustified.

In this subsection, Saha does not support either of the Indian theories of the origin of validity. He merely claims that the fact that there are such theories shows that Indian epistemology has theories of justification. I do not quite understand his claim. My belief B is justified to me only when I know that B has justification, be it external or internal. In that sense, justification is subjective, or inter-subjective. But justification of B is totally indifferent to the origin of B. When I claim that I have a justified belief B, I do not claim that its validity has been generated. Perhaps Saha could have shown how justification and the origin of validity are philosophically related.

(III) In the section on 'Knowledge of knowledge', Saha discusses the KK thesis of Hintikka: S knows that P implies that S knows that S knows that P. Here Saha points out that some Advaita philosophers wanted to understand *jñāna* as a cognition that is always true. (It seems here he refers to Acarya Madhusudana Saraśvatl.) What is not true is illusory or a*jñāna*. Thus in this specific theory, *jñāna* implies truth. The Advaitin maintains that cognition or *jñāna* is auto-luminous (svatah-prakasa). I.e., not only does the cognition C reveal its object, it reveals itself. That means, at least in Advaita, one knows P means one knows that one knows P. Thus the theory of *jñāna* as a synonym of knowledge together with the theory of auto-luminosity is almost equivalent to the KK thesis. This point is ingenious.

I cannot help raising another question here. Saha seems to artificially enforce an equivalence here. He almost shows a one-to-one mapping between Indian and western ideas. What is the significance of such a mapping? What if Indians had their own ways of looking at epistemic issues? Why should the two traditions share ideas? I think (at a meta-philosophical level) this is an extension of the great Indian colonial hangover. Perhaps both the philosophical traditions wanted to know the conditions under which one has un-accidentally true cognitions, cognitions one can rely on. But their analytic tools are perhaps very different. Without applying almost brutal forces, it is perhaps impossible to show that both the traditions have similar philosophical techniques.

CHAPTER 2: GAṄGEŚA'S REACTION TO SOME GETTIER LIKE PROBLEMS

Saha has discussed here a Gettier like example cited by Praśastapāda. In fact, Praśastapāda's inferential fallacies (hetvabhasas) are a little different from those of the Naiyāyika. The example Saha discusses in this section often escapes the eyes of the philosophers. Perhaps it has not been discussed in any other English writings on Classical Indian Philosophy. Here is the case: S sees steam on a hill and takes it for smoke and infers that 'this hill has fire, since it has smoke'. Now the hill really has fire, unknown to S. Thus S's inference is true, though it should not be considered valid. According to Praśastapāda, this inference is blocked by an inferential defect, namely tadbhavasiddhi. There is no doubt that wherever smoke is, there fire is, i.e., fire pervades smoke. But here S's cognition that 'this hill has fire' has not been generated by smoke that is pervaded by fire; it is generated by steam mistaken as smoke. Saha has quoted Gaṅgeśa, who said that such an inference was valid. Naturally Saha has every reason to say that Gaṅgeśa did not do justice to Praśastapāda's tadbhavasiddha hetu. Saha also tells us the possible reason for

Gaṅgeśa's reaction to this issue. If it is a case of inferential blocking (hetvabhasa), then it can only be asiddha. What is asiddha? Suppose one infers that 'x has y, since z'. Now, suppose x never exists. Suppose x is a round square. In that case, the inference will have the defect called asrayasiddhi. Suppose z (the Reason) is not there in x. Then the defect is called svarupasiddhi. Suppose either the Reason (i.e., z here) or the Target (i.e., y here) has incorrect or impossible adjectives; in that case their existence will be un-established. For example, suppose y is 'golden fire'. There is no golden fire. Thus this is a case of an un-established Reason or Target, and the defect is called vyapyatvasiddhi. As a Naiyāyika, Gaṅgeśa could not accept an asiddhi of the fourth kind. The aforementioned case cannot be subsumed under any asiddhi described above.

So he has to say that here there is no inferential defect involved in the case cited by Praśastapāda. There is no doubt that Gaṅgeśa's reaction is counterintuitive! But I think that a Gangesite could still say that Gaṅgeśa's framework, and for that case any Neo Naiyāyika epistemic framework, could have shown that such an inference is invalid without referring to any inferential blocker. Such an inferential cognition is invalid since it is just not tad-vati tat-prakaraka. Let us consider the cognition: this hill has fire, since (it has) smoke. In the smoke part, the cognition is simply invalid since its qualificandum or visesya is steam while its qualifier or prakara is smoke-ness. Steam does not have smoke-ness. Thus, in the smoke part, the cognition is dhumatva-abhava-vati dhumatva-prakaraka. Therefore it is blatantly invalid.

CHAPTER 3: TRUTH AS AVYABHICARITATVA

The term *avyabhicara* means non-deviation. This chapter examines the Nyāya definitions of truth and compares them to western definitions of truth. According to Vatsyayana, when the cognition C does not deviate from its object O, i.e., when C captures O as it is (tasmin tadbuddhi), C is true or avyabhicarin; otherwise vyabhicarin. Thus when C represents a rope as a snake, C is vyabhicarin. Gaṅgeśa takes up this definition and expresses it with a little more clarity: tad-vati tat-prakaraka anubhava is *pramā*. The cognition 'x is y' presents x as qualified by the property y-ness. This cognition is valid if it is fresh or non-mnemic, and x really has the property y-ness.[3] Here one cannot help comparing Gaṅgeśa's definition to Tarski's semantic conception of truth.

I did not find anything novel in this chapter. I would think that Saha has included it for purely explanatory reasons. I have just one issue here: Saha wanted to talk about the definition of truth, but ended up discussing Gaṅgeśa's definition of valid cognition (*pramā*). He certainly does not mean to say that truth and validity are one and the same thing. It would be nice if he could show how Gaṅgeśa's definition of truth is not a definition of validity.

CHAPTER 4: A NOTE ON THE NYĀYA DEFINITION OF *PRAMĀ*

Saha begins this chapter with a theory proposed by Sibajiban Bhattacharyya. We know that a cause C (or necessary condition) of an event E can be inferred from E. But the reverse is always not true. For example, one may see raining clouds in the sky. Merely from the sight of the cloud one may not infer rain. For a stormy wind may wipe the clouds off. But from heavy rain one may safely infer that the rain followed black raining clouds. Thus just from a cause one should not infer the effect. Bhattacharyya suggest that, from an epistemic demerit, which causes illusions, one should not infer that an illusion would follow. Likewise, the following inference need not be faulty just because its cause is faulty:

All dusty things are fiery. This hill is dusty. ∴ This hill is fiery.

Suppose the hill is really fiery. In that case, the inference should be accepted as valid. It should not be considered invalid just because one of its causes, namely the knowledge of the pervasion having the form, 'all dusty things are fiery' is faulty.

Bhattacharyya's theory seems to be counterintuitive. Saha has a suggestion here. And I think his suggestion can do the job the fourth condition of the JTB theory (of knowledge) is supposed to do. We may remember that there are valid cognitions of four types a la Nyāya; perception, inference, testimony and analogical cognition. The cognitions of each type are caused by a specific set of (causal) factors. For example, in the case of perceptual cognitions the set consists of the connection between the sense and the object, the connection between mind and the sense, sufficient auxiliary conditions (as in the case of visual perception, sufficient light) etc. The causal set is common to the cognitions of a specific kind. This set is called *jñāna-karana-samagri.* We may note here that the same causal set generates both perceptual knowledge and perceptual error. The same set generates errors and *knowledge* of the same kind. What differentiates a piece of knowledge from an error is the following. The causal set along with *guṇa* (epistemic merit) generates a valid cognition while the causal set along with *dosa* (epistemic demerit) causes an invalid cognition. We must notice that 'the causal set + *guṇa/dosa*' serves as the necessary and sufficient condition for the generation of a valid/invalid cognition. If all the factors that bring forth rain are present and if their presence is accompanied by the absence of hindrances, then it will definitely rain. It will rain by definition. Thus, according to Saha, we may say that if a cognition is caused by the causal set and *guṇa,* it must be valid. And this argument shows that the aforementioned inference is invalid. For one of its causes was faulty. i.e., it had a *dosa.*

Even after reading this excellent and novel theory proposed by Saha, one may raise the following issue: his theory uses terms like *guṇa* or dosa without defining them. How does one define *guṇa*? Can one define *guṇa* without referring to validity? Well, even if one can, we have not yet seen how the definition would look like. I think it will be circular. In that case, in order to get rid of one devil we would invite another. I would like to see how Saha tackles this issue which he does not address in his book.

CHAPTER 5: KNOWLEDGE OF IDENTITY: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical analysis of identity in the Indian framework is different from that in the western framework. Saha begins with a specific example of identity: ghato *ghaṭaḥ* (A/this pot is a/this pot). On the one hand one must say that this is a valid identity statement which a cognizing subject knows. Thus they have knowledge of identity. On the other hand, according to Saha, the Indian framework would have some problems with the status of this statement. It is neither perceptual, nor inferential, nor testimonial; nor is it analogical. Then it is not valid (*pramānika*). The Indian logician would say that the property that determines the subject-hood of a sentence (uddesyata-avacchedaka) must be different from the property that determines the predicate-hood (vidheyata-avacchedaka) of the sentence. In other words, the subject must be different from the predicate; otherwise the sentence would be in a sense insignificant since it is not informative. So, Saha concludes "'*ghaṭaḥ ghaṭaḥ*' is not taken as representing identity".[4]

If the Indian framework cannot account for the fact that everybody intuitively understands that x is x, then the framework, I daresay, is not powerful enough. I think the Indian logical framework is quite rich. Indian epistemology is not just the interplay of *pramāṇas.* When *pramāṇas* fail to determine the nature of an object, *tarka* may come to rescue the cognizing subject. I cite one example of *anyonyāśraya-tarka*: one asks whether this pot could be caused by this very pot. No *pramāṇa* would answer this question. But the following *anyonyāśraya tarka* would answer: 'had this pot been its own cause then it would have pre-existed itself; for a cause pre-exists its effect. But self-pre-existence is not possible. Hence this pot could not have caused itself.' The *tarka* that enables us to know the statement 'x is x' is a *vyāghāta tarka* (contradiction) having the following form: 'x must be x; for if it is not x then it will be a non-x. Nothing is at the same time x and non-x since that is contradictory.' *Tarka* is sort of a counterfactual reasoning that is mostly based on the *reductio ad absurdum* method.

After rejecting statements having the form 'x is x' as representatives of identity, Saha turns to the following statement: *ghaṭaḥ śyāmaḥ* (this pot is black). For him this is an identity statement that equates two things having seemingly different attributes. He tells us here that the perceptual cognition 'x is y' is not really a representative of the identity relation since in this case y-ness resides in x through inherence/other relations. But when this sentence is testimonial, it represents the identity relation since the x part presents a thing *a* with the property x-ness and the *y* part presents a thing *b* with the property y-ness when x-ness is not the same as y-ness. The (testimonial) statement reveals that despite having different properties, *a* and *b* are identical.

The Advaitin also takes up the identity issue very seriously. Saha cites the following Advaita examples: (1) *daśamas tvam asi* (you are the tenth person), and (2) *tat tvam asi* (you [the limited being] are that [absolute being *brahmaṇ*]). To somebody who is one among ten people, and who has forgotten to count himself, the tenth man seems to have been lost. Such a person thinks that he is different from the tenth member of the group he is part of. But a stranger tells him, 'nobody is lost; you are the tenth man'. Here two seemingly different entities, i.e., the person who counts the members of a group of ten and the tenth member of the group, get united and become one through the relation of identity. The one who identifies oneself with a limited being with limited power, lifespan and wisdom thinks that one is different from the absolute, the one with infinite power, wisdom and existence; because one does not know that one is actually the absolute. But the Advaitin tells one that 'you are that' and convinces one that one is indeed that. Barring the metaphysical analysis, what does identity do here? Once again identity chops off the apparent differences and establishes the common-ness since here seemingly contradicting properties like omniscience and limited wisdom, eternity and impermanence etc. are actually housed in one single locus, the consciousness (*caitanya*). Thus the consciousness housing the property x gets equated with the consciousness housing the property non-x. Identity rejects the conflicting properties as illusory, and establishes the oneness of consciousness. This is *akhaṇḍārtha-bodha,* the understanding of the non-relational unity which was covered by illusory difference. Identity statements uncover such unity. Saha's discussion is very sketchy here. He mentions the Fregean analysis of identity statements. It would be really great if he showed the similarities and differences between the Fregean analysis and the Advaita analysis.

CHAPTER 6: ARGUING FOR NYĀYA THEORY OF SENTENTIAL MEANING

This chapter is a little longish. I will try to summarize what Saha wants to say here. Let us consider the sentence 'ghaṭam ānaya' (bring the pot). There are two ways of considering the constituents of this sentence: (1) following the Grammarian, one can say that there are two padas, i.e., two inflected (sup-tin-anta) stems/roots here, ghaṭam (ghaṭa (pot) + accusative singular suffix) and ānaya (ā√nī" (to bring) + imperative second personal suffix); or (2) following the Neo Naiyāyika, one can say that there are four padas (minimum meaningful units) here, ghaṭa, am (nominal accusative inflection), ā√nī, and loṭ hi (imperative conjugational inflection). A school can take any interpretation. But they have to account for the following fact: one hears the aforementioned sentence and understands its meaning. Suppose the meaning of the phrase 'x' is [|x|]. The meaning of the phrase 'x y' then should be [|x|]R[|y|] where R is the relation between the meanings [|x|] and [|y|]. The argument here is this: there is a difference between reading dictionary-entries and hearing a sentence. Suppose H reads three successive dictionary-entries, 'bring', 'the' and 'pot'. H will understand the meanings of the entries as [|bring|], [|the|] and [|pot|]; but the meanings will be unconnected. But when S tell H, 'bring the pot', H's understanding of the sentence-meaning would somehow look like this: [|bring|]R_1[|the|]R_2[|pot|]. This precisely is the difference between a few unconnected words and a linguistically significant phrase. Thus the meaning of a linguistic phrase or a sentence is actually the relation between the meanings of its constituents. Every school of Indian Philosophy accepts this thesis. Their debate is centered around the causal process that finally generates [|x|]R[|y|] in the mind of H after H hears the phrase 'x y'.

There are three sides of the debate.

(1) anvitābhidhāna theory: According to Saha, the Prābhākara's theory is the following. (i) When H hears the phrase 'ghaṭam ānaya', first 'ghaṭam' generates [|ghaṭam|]R and 'ānaya'' R[|ānaya|]. (ii) Then the two meaning elements get related and [|ghaṭam|]R[|ānaya|] is generated.

(2) abhihitanvaya theory: This is the Bhatta theory. (i) The words 'ghaṭam' and 'ānaya' give their respective meanings [|ghaṭam|] and [|ānaya|]. (ii) As the words have mutual expectancy (akanksa), [|ghaṭam|] and [|ānaya|] get connected through R and [|ghaṭam|]R[|ānaya|] is generated.

(3) saṃsargamaryādā theory: This theory is supported by Gaṅgeśa and the Neo Naiyāyika. (i) After 'ghaṭam ānaya' is heard, all four morphemes 'ghaṭa 'am', 'a√nī and 'loṭ hi give their respective meanings, [jgha.taj], [|am|] (= object-ness), [|ā√nī|] and [|loṭ hi|] (= imperative sense). These meanings are generated through recollection since only the one who knows and remembers the meaning of a word can understand the meaning after hearing the word. (ii) As the meanings

> have expectancy etc. they get connected and [|ghaṭa||] R_1[|am|] R_2 [|ā√nī|] R_3[|lot hi|] is generated. (3) is not very different from (2). (3) claims that the job of a word 'x' is over the moment x has generated [|x|]. Then the meanings cause the R's. On the contrary, (3) claims that the morphemes (minimum meaningful units rather than the words) themselves generate the connected sentence meaning, through an intermediate step: they generate their meanings first and then R.

I think Saha's presentation of the Anvitābhidhāna theory is not what the Prābhākara means to claim. According to the Prābhākara, the genesis of [|x|]R[|y|] is a mutual functional application. The word x has got a semantic power, sakti, which works as a function. In fact, Salikanatha in his Vakyarthamatrka talks about semantic powers of two types, (i) the recollecting power (smarakatva) through which x merely presents [|x|]. This operates even when H reads dictionary-entries. There is no novelty in it. (ii) the designating power (abhidhayakatva) through which 'x' in 'x y' generates [|x|]R[|y|] and also 'y' in 'x y' generates [|x|]R[|y|]. Two different powers 'x' and 'y' have operated as mutual functions and generate the sentence-meaning. There is no reduplication here. Suppose a weighing machine gives the reading 20 when John stands on it. This reading '20' is of course the value returned by the machine which 'took' John as argument. Also we can see it as a value returned by John when he stands on the weighing machine. It is a product of a mutual operation. But it explains the fact that R can be a novel thing. Words have powers to generate this novel thing. Saha supports the Nyāya theory. But he did not show how the genesis of R could be accounted for in the Nyāya framework. As a sense organ the eye has the power to get connected with an O and generate the visual knowledge of O. Every object-eye connection is new. But each connection is generated by the sense-power the eye has. Likewise, the word 'ghaṭam' has the power to take 'ānaya' as argument and return the connected meaning [ghaṭam||]R[|ānaya||]. The word 'ānaya' too has the same power.[5] Saha can say that the Naiyāyika does not admit any semantic power; they say that just memory generates the meanings; thus the Nyāya theory is more economical than the Prābhākara theory. But with their 'economical' theory the Naiyāyika has to show that a novel relation

R can be generated by words. Mutual expectancy is no answer. It simply works as a glue. At least Saha's writings do not explain the genesis of a novel R in the Nyāya framework.

CHAPTER 7: MEANING OF THE FIRST PERSON PRONOUN: GAṄGEŚA'S VIEW AND ITS PERSPECTIVE

Why should one refer to an object as a cow? There must be some property in the object that makes one refer to it as a cow. That property is called the application-determining property (*pravṛtti-nimitta*) as far as the application of the word 'cow' is concerned. Cow-ness is present in all cows and that is why one sees an object that has cow-ness and refers to it as a cow. In this simple case, it is easy to find the application-determinant for the word 'cow'. But it is not always easy. Let us take an example. In Sanskrit, a *dhenu* is a milch cow, not just any cow. That means it has two relevant properties, cow-ness and milch-ness. Saha shows the ontological problems that would result from treating both the properties as application-determinants. In Gaṅgeśa's analysis, only milch-ness is the application-determinant for the word *dhenu*. But there are milch goats and milch buffalos. Then the application-determinant will unnecessarily make one refer to a milch goat too as a *dhenu*. This is not desired. So Gaṅgeśa says that in such cases cow-ness works as a restrictor or *prayogopādhi*. First you take the set of milch animals; then you restrict your set by cow-ness. As a consequence what you get is the intersection of the set of cows and the set of milch animals. Here the restrictor or *prayogopādhi* alone does not determine the referents of the word *dhenu*. With these notions, we would see how Saha presents Gaṅgeśa's unique understanding of personal pronouns.

The case of 'I' is really problematic. It is not like 'cow'. Cow-ness is present in several things while in that sense I-ness is not present in many objects. When I say 'I' I mean to refer to one object, and that is me. On the other hand, 'I' is not like proper names which are unique. Thus 'Gaṅgeśa' will always refer to one person while 'I' will not refer to just one person. When I say 'I' it refers to me. When Tom says 'I' it refers to him. 'I' share features with composite terms such as *dhenu* too. Its referents have a few common properties mentioned by Gaṅgeśa. They are the property of being part of cognitions (buddhisthatva), the property of being an addressee (*sambodhyatva*) and the property of being an utterer of 'I' (*uccārayitṛtva*). Which one among them could be the application-determinant? Saha says, after analyzing Gaṅgeśa's view in details, 'none'. The property of being an addressee is sort of adventitious. Not always does one who uses 'I' addresses somebody. There is nothing unique about having the property of being part of cognitions. What remains is the property of being an utterer of 'I' (*uccārayitṛtva*). Now notice it is a general property that resides in all individuals that use 'I'. But in a context, 'I' must pick up a specific individual. Gaṅgeśa says that here although this property does not determine the application of 'I', it operates as a restrictor. Whenever somebody utters 'I', this property makes them an object that is referred to as 'I'. After analyzing the views of Gaṅgeśa on this issue, Saha says that perhaps there is no application-determinant for the word 'I'.

Saha tells us that Gaṅgeśa's commentators Jayadeva and Rucidatta say that the referent of 'I' in a sentence containing 'I' is the utterer when the 'I' is not part of a quotation, i.e., 'I' is used in an independent (svatantra) way. For example, when H says that 'I heard John say that 'I am smart'', the first 'I' is independent and refers to H whereas the second 'I' refers to John since it is part of a quotation. But this view does not clearly say whether there is an application-determinant for 'I'.

CHAPTER 8: ADVAITA VIEW OF *INDRIYA* AND *SĀKṢI-JÑĀNA*

In this chapter Saha discusses the theories of senses. His main concerns are the Nyāya and Advaita theories here. The Nyāya theory says that there are six sense organs, five external such as eye etc. and one internal organ, mind (*manas*). External sense organs capture the external objects like a pot or a cow while mind captures internal or cognitive objects such as pain, pleasure and cognition. Each external sense S is made up of the same material which S's objects are made of. e.g., eye (not the orbit, the real sense) is made up of light and captures light.

The Advaita theory of senses is radically different from the Nyāya theory. According to the Advaitin, there is an inner organ, antaḥkaraṇa.

It is the main sense. External senses are like windows. The inner organ is like water or a gas which can go out through any of the senses and capture the object. Advaita thinks that there is only one substance, consciousness. The subject, their inner sense and the object are nothing but the consciousness on which all these illusory tags have been superimposed, as a rope-snake is superimposed on a rope. The subject consciousness S and the object O are the same thing. But ignorance covers their identity. When the inner sense goes out and reaches the object, the former assumes the form of the latter, i.e., they become one.

They have always been one. Only ignorance covered their unity. The inner sense destroys the ignorance-cover and reveals the unity. Now at this cognitively connected stage, S, the inner sense and O get united, and O is known to S. Thus in a sense S knows itself.

Saha seems to say that the Advaita theory does not have any mind; the role of mind is played by some other epistemic mechanism. But this is not completely true since the Bhamati school of Advaita believes in mind as a sense organ. Anyway, Saha considers the views of the Vivarana school only. According to this school, all the mental states that do not have any ignorance-covered state are revealed directly to the witness-consciousness. A real rope is ignorance-covered as long as I do not cognize it. The inner sense destroys the cover. But an illusory snake, pleasure, pain, cognition etc. are always uncovered. Their existence is their cognitive existence. It is not possible that they exist unknown to the subject. According to Advaita, it is not possible for me not to know that I am happy or unhappy. As the witness consciousness directly knows such mental states, the Advaita epistemology does not need any mind.

The last subsection of this chapter talks about the witness-cognition (saksi-*jñāna*) and the collective work culture. I must admit that I did not quite understand this discussion. So I am unable to review this subsection.

While reading this book I was all through bugged by a question: why fusion epistemology? Why to look at Indian epistemology from a western perspective? Except having some common questions, perhaps the two traditions do not share anything; neither the motivations, nor the philosophical tools. I may try to guess the unwritten agenda of the fusion epistemologist. In the age of Indian 'renaissance', a few people wanted to see Indian thoughts in the light of western ideas. In fact, some of them went to the extent of saying that there were quite a few spurious Indian ideas that were not compatible with the enlightened western ideas.[6] What was implicit in their idea was this: anything that was incompatible with the western ideas was rubbish. In the middle of the last century, a group of intellectuals, who were unable to appreciate the profoundly rational and thoroughly rigorous approaches of Indian Philosophy, tried to establish a ridiculous view: Indian philosophy was spiritual whereas western philosophy rational. Towards the end of the century, some trained philosophers, who could see the rational and rigorous nature of Indian thoughts, tried to tell the westerners, ' Look here! Our philosophy has all (or many things) that your philosophy has. So we are great.' It was not just an attempt to appreciate Indian thought in the light of the western thoughts; it was an attempt to measure Indian achievements according to the western standards. For me this is nothing but a pure and simple colonial attitude. Is fusion epistemology an offspring of the same attitude? I do not know.

NOTES

1. The term has been coined by Arindam Chakrabarti.
2. In the case of an inferential cognition, 'x has y, since x has z', the Reason, Target and Site are z, y and x respectively.
3. The term 'non-mnemic' is just to exclude memory.
4. Saha (2009: 60)
5. Salikanatha says that *gam* generates *ānayana-anvita-gotvam* while *ānaya* generates *gotva-anvita-ānayanam*. No Prābhākara claims that *gam* generates *gotva-anvaya* which is an analogue of Saha's aR.
6. See Vidyasagar's 1853 letter that was written in response to the Balantine report.

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Contributors

1. MANISHA BARUA Professor of Philosophy in the University of Gauhati, Assam.
2. RAJAT KANTI DAS Retired Professor of Anthropology, Vidyasagar University (W.B).
3. NIRMALYA GUHA Associate Professor in the Department of HSS, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur.
4. MD. SIRAJUL ISLAM Associate Professor of Philosophy, Viswabharati University, Shantiniketan.
5. GOPAL CHANDRA KHAN Retired Professor of Philosophy, Burdwan University, Burdwan, (W.B.).
6. G.C. NAYAK Retired Professor & Head of Philosophy Department, Utkal University and former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Sri Jagannath University, Puri (Orissa).
7. SUJATA PURKAYASTHA Professor & Head of Sanskrit Department, Gauhati University.
8. NAVJIVAN RASTOGI Retired Professor & Head of Sanskrit and Prakrit Department, University of Lucknow.
9. JAYANTA SARKAR Retired Director of the Kolkata Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India.
10. BINOD SARMA Former Principal of Chaigaon College, Assam. Retired as Editor of Gazeteer of the Government of Assam.
11. NILIMA SHARMA Retired Professor & Head of Philosophy Department, Gauhati University.
12. *REVEREND* R. ZOLAWMA Church Leader of Mizoram State.

Notes for Contributors

Submission of articles and related correspondence should be addressed to:

The Editor
Sandhān
DD-24, (Near Nehru Enclave)
Kalkaji
New Delhi – 110 019.

Tel. (011) 2622 7832, 2622 7836
Tele-fax: (011) 2622 7831
E-mail: csc@del2.vsnl.net.in

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